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THE MANLY CHRIST

A NEW VIEW

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THE MANLY CHRIST,

A NEW VIEW.

BY

DR. R. W. CONANT.

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CHICAGO,
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CHAPTER I.

The Feminizing of Christianity.

The statement that the men in Christian countries take less interest in religion than the women requires neither argument nor proof. Not only have the statistics of church attendance been published, but also any one can easily verify the statement for himself in any congregation. The women in attendance always outnumber the men, often by several hundred per cent. Yet even that does not measure the real disproportion of interest, for many of the men are present merely to please women or children in whom they are interested, or from considerations of "good policy".

Part of this chapter has appeared in the Chicago *Interior*.

Many explanations of this seeming masculine obliquity have been offered—the emotional nature of women, the preoccupation of men with business, and so-forth. But the trouble with these explanations is that they do not explain. Why should Christianity, alone of all religions, present this anomaly? Why is it that in zeal for religions other than Christianity the men outdo the women?

There is one explanation so obvious that it seems to escape observation—the Feminizing of Christianity. When you stop to think of it, what is there in the personality of Christ, as usually presented, to attract the interest or inspire the enthusiasm of hard-headed, practical men? Of course men of emotional temperament or religious tendencies are likely to be attracted by the ideality of his character and doctrine, but the men who do the world's rough work and have little idealism regard Christianity as all very well for women and children, but not "practical" for men.

Consider the conventional Christ, as presented by Christian art and Christian preaching. From lovely illuminated church windows and from Sunday school banners he looks down upon us, "meek and lowly", with an expression of sweetness and resignation, eyes often

down-cast, soft hands gently folded, long curling hair brushed smoothly from a central parting—all feminine, passive, negative. Although he lived in a country where the sun's heat during a large part of the year made some covering for the head a necessity, art requires that Christ should always go bareheaded; probably in order to give full effect to his womanish hair and appearance.

Then for fear that they might not give him sufficient appearance of sanctity and purity, Christ must present to us a languid pose and smooth lineless features, destitute of expression save a pensive melancholy; no character, no virility. To this insipid portrait is attached some appropriate sentiment, such as "Feed my lambs"!

Now all this seems very beautiful and very sacred to many church people, and doubtless they would be much shocked by the suggestion of substituting a different conception, but they may be very sure that the Church can never retain its hold on the great body of men by offering them that kind of a Christ. The Feminizing of Christianity is the real reason why men are not interested. Christian art and Christian preaching need a strong tonic of Virility.

It will not do to try to explain this away by claiming that modern men are too sordid and materialistic to be capable of high enthusiasms. It is true that this is an age of wonderful material advance, but current events contain plenty of evidence that men are now, as they have always been, quickly responsive to the personal touch, enthusiastic in following a real leader of men, often surprisingly idealistic. But they *are* critical. Mere convention no longer compels them. That is the reason why the most magnetic of all the magnetic leaders of men is losing his hold on the masculine imagination and interest.

There has never been any difficulty in making the old Hebrew prophets and leaders virile enough; Abraham, Moses, and David were aggressive, manly men. Was Christ any less manly because he was free from their grossness and moral blemish? A gentleman is not necessarily effeminate. There is altogether too much popular inclination to assume that goodness cannot be thoroughly manly, and so we have much twaddle from those who should know better about "boys will be boys," and "a young man must sow his wild oats"—which is simply one way in which respectability condones folly and licentiousness. It is most

regrettable that anything in Christian teaching should seem to favor this mistaken idea of manliness. *Christ stands for the highest type of a strong, virile man, and there was nothing effeminate about him.*

Let us consider what it would mean for Christian art and preaching to present to the world a man's Christ. What sort of a Christ would command the admiration and reverence of the lawyer, the banker, and the reporter; of the teamster on the street, of the cowboy on the plains, of the engineer at the throttle?

The qualities required for a leader of men are these, arranged in order of importance: courage, "nerve", force (physical, mental, or moral), "squareness", foresight, sound judgment, persistence, endurance, self-reliance, resourcefulness, shrewdness, organizing and executive ability, camaraderie, generosity, and ability to talk and argue convincingly. Of these the first four are absolutely essential. No man can hope to lead others who lacks any one of them. The rest, though not essential, are of great importance and will add much to the influence of the man who possesses them.

Courage and nerve are not exactly the same, although the one generally involves the other, but there is no quality which so promptly commands respect as

either of them. To the man who never flinches, his sins, though be as crimson, shall be forgiven by the world. "Nerve" is a bit of slang which is so useful as to be almost indispensable, since there is no other word which conveys exactly the same idea. It denotes that physical, mental and moral quality which gives its fortunate possessor perfect command of himself under any and all circumstances, whether in the face of danger or other trying conditions. He is not simply courageous; the "nervy" man finds in danger and conflict a pleasing stimulus, opposition and difficulties only inspire him, nothing ever "rattles" him.

A leader of men must have force, especially physical force. But physical weakness may be overlooked, provided he has mental or moral force sufficient to make up for the deficiency; but force of some kind he must have.

"Squareness" means incapacity for doing or saying anything petty, mean or small; a natural largeness of temperament. This is absolutely essential, for men are prompt to despise meanness, and they will not follow one whom they despise.

The possessor of these four characteristics can command the loyalty of men, particularly in circumstances

of danger. But if he is to secure their confidence for any length of time he must also possess foresight and judgment, self-reliance, persistence and endurance; if the conditions are complex, he must be able to add resourcefulness, shrewdness, and an ability for organization; finally, if he is to win their affection, he must be a good comrade and generous. Generosity is not essential to leadership, for men often follow a selfish leader, provided they find him able to further their own selfish aims. But most of the great leaders of men —Alexander, Hannibal, Julius Cæsar, Napoleon—have recognized the wisdom of displaying generosity and good-fellowship toward their followers.

Did Christ fill these requirements for a leader of men? Yes. The story of his life—even the little we know of it—proves that he possessed all the qualifications save one, the talent for organization. Doubtless he possessed that also, but the plan of his life did not call for organization, so we have no evidence on that point. This subject of Christ's qualifications as a leader of men will be considered more in detail in subsequent chapters.

To these peculiarly manly characteristics Christ added a sublimity of thought and expression, a purity

of life, and an unselfish devotion which rounded out the perfect circle of the perfect man. Many world leaders have described larger or smaller arcs of that perfection, but all have lacked important portions.

If, then, Christ was such a perfect leader of men, why not say something about it? Why not hold up to the world a portrait, drawn to the life, of the Manly Christ in place of the womanish? Read that terrific outburst beginning, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer"; and ending, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" What scorn, what invective; what exposure, arraignment, and condemnation combined! Think you that Christ looked meek and lowly and feminine then, as he poured forth those scorching words? Why have we no Christ of the Denunciation, towering majestic, tense with righteous wrath; the eye flashing, the arm stretched forth in judgment—the impersonation of masterful virility! Are the painters and preachers afraid of it? To be sure, it would be something of an innovation, it might not look exactly pretty on the walls of a Sunday-school room, but it would command the respect of all virile

men. Men like a leader who can "get mad clear through" at the right time; who can "roast" and "score" the other side, saying the things tremendously which they would like to say, but know not how; who can beat down and silence all reply by sheer force of personality. That was exactly what Christ did.

There were other occasions when Christ got angry with cause, but little is said about them. It is nicer to talk about miracles. But men of action, men with good red blood in their arteries, feel drawn toward a Christ who had the manliness to whip the rascally brokers out of the Temple, hurling their tables right and left and scattering the money over the floor, as he cried, "It is written, 'My house is the house of prayer'; but ye have made it a den of thieves"! How his eye must have flashed, and how terrible his wrath, when before his single arm the whole crowd ran like whipped curs! They were many against one, and that one had no authority and no power, yet they did not dare put up a fight. If they had, can we have any doubt whether Christ would have proved himself a good fighter? How often must his fingers have tingled for a good grip on the handle of a sword when he saw evil triumphant! Not the least of his trials, in which

he was tried like ourselves, must have been the necessity which he usually laid upon himself of denying the natural outlash of a strong man's wrath. Does that sound scandalous? Was he not the "Prince of Peace"? But what did *he* say? "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword."

The quality in Christ which appeals most strongly to "the man in the street" is his perfect nerve. Try to imagine his position. On the one hand stand Priests, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law; many of them members of the Sanhedrim, the famous head and center of Jewish authority both spiritual and temporal; men well versed in all the learning of their age, and at the same time subtle and unscrupulous politicians; proud men, accustomed to predominate and to receive unquestioning homage. From childhood up Christ had been taught to revere them.

On the other hand stands the common crowd, mostly ignorant, fanatical and superstitious; accustomed all their lives to look up to the Scribes and Pharisees as the holders of divine authority and perfect wisdom. Bowed for more than a century under the double yoke of Pharisee and Roman, they have cheered their faint-

ing hearts with the promise of a great Deliverer, who is to come according to ancient prophecy and drive out the heavy-handed Gentile. Christ's assurance that the long expected Messiah now stands before them has fanned their hopes into a feeble flame blown hither and thither by gusts of doubt.

Between these two extremes of the common people and the uncommon stands the Son of Man. What is he to their eyes? An uneducated laboring man, holding no office, no title, no diploma from any institution of learning; a self-taught, penniless, powerless preacher —a nobody.

In the background are seen Roman officers, contemptuously indifferent to all this pother about religious doctrines, but keenly alert for any sign of sedition. The Roman was a supremely practical pagan; provided he held the military power, he cared not what gods you worshiped, or how.

Such are the *dramatis personae.*

It is impossible for us to realize the contempt with which the haughty ecclesiastics regard this Nazarene —the very name a synonym for reproach. Scorning him with all the double scorn of caste and bigotry, they are nevertheless compelled to fear and hate him

for his influence over the common people. Were it not for that, they would notice him no more than a dog. Of course they expect him to be overawed, to feel his insignificance and quail before the greatest power and authority in his nation. But if, in spite of all, he should have the audacity to attempt an argument with them, they count it easy to browbeat this ignorant laborer into silence, or to trip him with the subtleties of their learning, or at least to exasperate him into the utterance of some hasty word which may be twisted into treason against the Roman government. What is their amazement and disgust to find that they have made the mistake of their lives; that the ignorant peasant parries their most skilful thrusts like an expert fencer, turning them lightly aside and coming back at them every time so keen and swift that they cannot ward him off!

Then they try setting traps for him of seemingly innocent questions, and just as they are congratulating themselves that he is on the point of stepping into one, Christ suddenly reveals by some sharp question that he has seen the snare all the time and has been only playing with them. Never can they catch him off his guard. Actually he seems to know the Law and the Prophets better than they themselves do!

At times he turns on them with swift reprisal, strips off their robe of super-sanctity and flays their hypocrisy unmercifully before the whole audience of Jews and Romans. All they can do is to retreat in speechless confusion, gnashing their teeth and nursing their wrath!

Was not that a supreme exhibition of quick wits, infallible intuitions, and perfect nerve? Christ understood the situation fully, he knew what was at stake and that he must rely upon himself alone. The well-wishers he had among the common people were powerless to aid him, even if they had been so disposed. Yet no pride of power, authority, or learning could "bluff" him for one moment, no fear frighten him into uttering one ill considered word.

Next to a good fighter men love a good talker, and in this also Christ was pastmaster. That he made so few permanent converts is no proof to the contrary, for we have his own matchless words as evidence. The wonder is that he made any converts at all, for he was trying to instil into the minds of his ignorant followers new and startling truths, which were as incomprehensible to their minds as they were offensive to all their prejudices. Only half comprehending him, they

were nevertheless won over by the combined beauty of his thoughts and the majesty of his address; for he spoke as one having authority, and not as the Scribes; his words were with power.

"A man is known by the company he keeps." That is to say, not by the company which he keeps from force of circumstances, but by that which he keeps from preference. Now there were three of the Disciples whose company Christ decidedly preferred, as he showed in various ways, and especially by selecting them to be present on several important occasions. It is very significant that these three were the impetuous Peter and the two Boanerges.

That Christ should have surnamed John and James the Sons of Thunder from the very beginning of their ordained discipleship, proves that the two brothers must have been strong, positive characters, with voices to match. But we know still more about them. We know that they were quite as headlong and presumptuous even as poor Peter, who was forever putting both feet in it and getting them stepped on severely. For it was one of these Sons of Thunder who undertook to assert his new discipleship by forbidding a man who cast out devils in Christ's name; because, for-

sooth, he did not follow *them!* For this intolerance Christ rebuked him mildly. Worse yet, when the inhabitants of a certain Samaritan village refused to receive Christ, the Sons of Thunder were in favor of calling down fire from heaven to consume them. This time Christ rebuked them severely.

But worst of all was the presumption and indelicacy of the effort to use their influence privately with the Master to induce him to discriminate in their favor and against their fellow Disciples. Their modest request was that they should be made the highest in the expected kingdom next to Christ himself! Instead of rebuking them, Christ asked if they could drink his cup, and be baptized with his baptism. To this test they replied boldly, "We can."

Finally, Peter was the only one of the Twelve who struck a blow in defence of his Master; and John and Peter were the only Disciples who dared to follow him after the arrest, and one of them kept as near him as possible to the very end. Of course there was this excuse for the others, that their leader had positively refused all physical protection and there seemed to be no way in which they could help him.

Now what does all this prove? Evidently, that these

three favorite Disciples were exceptionally bold men, brave to the point of rashness, warm-hearted and hot-headed; men of intense feeling and quick action. Yet with all their faults, in spite of presumption and worldliness and disposition to rough-ride, Christ loved them best; for in one respect at least they were men after his own heart—they were virile men. Of all the Disciples the Three were the most fearless, ambitious, and masterful; the men to lead a forlorn hope, to go through flood and fire to the end on which they had set their hearts. In this Christ found them kindred spirits. Anything better than sodden people—half-alive-half-dead people—no generous enthusiasm, no responsiveness, no "go"!

But can this be the "gentle John," beloved by the "meek and lowly Jesus"? What a mistaken idea of both has prevailed! How it clears up many difficulties, otherwise insurmountable, when we get the right angle of view. For centuries Bible readers have stumbled over the plain evidences of John's real character, wondering how they were to be reconciled with his alleged gentleness, missing the obvious explanation.

There is no authority for calling John gentle more than any other Disciple, rather the contrary; but this

seems to have been considered a necessary corollary to the proposition that Christ was meek and lowly. Both proposition and corollary are equally gratuitous. On *one* occasion, after he had been rebuking the pride of the unrepentant cities, Christ said of himself by way of contrast that he was "meek and lowly *in heart*"; but that is no evidence that he was meek and lowly in speech or action. Nor was he peculiar in this. All truly strong and great characters have been meek and lowly *in heart*.

Although Christ was always winning to those who would be won, always ready to reason with the reasonable, he was stern and terrible to the evil-minded. Although he never carried a weapon, there was a tremendous personality in him, the compelling power of the man who has put all fear, even the fear of death, behind him. His fearlessness filled his enemies with fear. Officers sent to take him returned empty-handed, but with the strangest excuse ever offered by an officer for failing to make an arrest as ordered—"Never man spake like this man."

But a wavering intention is often crystallized into action by some slight shock of circumstance; Judas' treacherous offer nerved the authorities to make the

attack which they had long been meditating. As Christ had showed himself in the Temple daily, it would have required very little detective work to discover his location at any time, had they so desired; but "oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." At last they muster up courage to attack him and come upon this one unarmed man and his eleven frightened followers, in the dead of night, with a display of force which is ridiculous. The hunters are more frightened than the hunted.

Even then, backed by all that civil and military force, they are paralyzed with fright at the first sound of that thrilling voice, at the first sight of that commanding presence flashed into bold relief against the blackness of the midnight foliage by the torches' fitful flare. There is quiet scorn in the words, "Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves to take me? I was daily with you in the Temple teaching, but ye took me not!" What a scene for an artist's strongest lines and colors!

The men of a strenuous age demand a strenuous Christ. If they fail to find him, the Church is to blame. For Christ himself was strenuous enough to satisfy the most exacting; he was stalwart and fearless, aggres-

sive and progressive; never flinching from a challenge, overwhelming in quickness and sharpness of attack; yet withal wary and wise, never "rattled," always holding himself well in hand. In the effort to magnify his divinity his humanity has been minimized to the vanishing point, he has been etherialized into a beautiful abstraction which has no flesh and blood reality for the average man. Ancient miracles do not interest the modern man, but he would be interested in a manly Christ who fought his way up and through just as he himself has to do. Christ was a real Leader of Men.

CHAPTER II.

How Did Christ Look?

The personal appearance of Christ reflected his character, it was manly and striking. His was a face and figure to catch the eye in a crowd, producing on all beholders an impression of combined dignity, power and attractiveness. It was far removed from the supposititious appearance which both painters and preachers have presented to the world for centuries, and it is time to recognize that fact. Hard-fisted men who are used to giving and taking hard knocks, to whom everything is intensely concrete and practical, are not likely to be impressed or attracted by a feminine Christ. No one can win their votes or adherence

who is not thoroughly masculine, who has not played a man's part in a man's world with courage, strength, and shrewdness. There is a grand opportunity awaiting the preacher who will adequately portray to his congregation this neglected side of Christ's personality; he will see that rarest of sights in these days—his pews filling up with *men.*

The modern idea of Christ's appearance is a reaction from the harshness of the mediæval conception, which was itself in violent contrast with the early Christian. As there is no contemporaneous picture of Christ, and no direct description of his appearance, the subject has presented an attractive field for speculation in all ages which has not been neglected. All sorts of descriptions and representations have come down to us along the centuries, often contradictory, sometimes ridiculous, yet generally with a great show of authority and accuracy.

Unfortunately for claims to authority on this subject, the early Christians shrank invincibly from any representation whatever of their Master's appearance; and so far as known, there is nothing of the kind extant previous to the fifth century, and no picture before the seventh. When not referred to by name,

Christ was symbolized by the early Church in various ways, especially by the cross and by the sign of the fish. At first the fish was used as a secret symbol, because the letters of the Greek word *ichthus,* meaning fish, spelled the initials of the Greek words signifying Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. There were several reasons for this symbolism; one being the dread of an approach to idolatry by the making of any image of the Divine. Another reason was that at first the spiritual significance of Christ's life altogether overshadowed its material aspects; and still another reason was that so many thought the end of the world was close at hand.

Justin Martyr, Origen, Tertullian, and others of the early Fathers of the Church settled the question of Christ's appearance, to their own satisfaction, at least, by insisting that he was short of stature and homely; because Isaiah, forsooth, was supposed to prophesy of him that he had "no form or comeliness," and there was "no beauty in him that we should desire him." For the sake of this literal acceptation of a supposed prophecy they flew in the face of all the facts and probabilities, and so deprived the early Christians of much consolation and advantage.

As passing centuries made Christ more remote and the stability of the earth more assured, a natural desire arose for something to realize him to the eye and various crude representations began to appear; of which many are still extant. Finally came a complete revolution of feeling in favor of an anthropomorphic Christ, which received formal and official sanction from the Council of Constantinople in 691 A. D. That Council decreed that henceforth Christ should be publicly exhibited in the form of a man and not of a lamb. Before long, however, the Iconoclastic, or image-smashing, reaction set in, which lasted more than a century, but was terminated by the Council of Constantinople of 842 A. D., which formally denounced Iconoclasm.

But no representation of Christ, not even the earliest, can truthfully lay claim to any authenticity whatever. Up to the tenth century Jesus was usually represented as a well-rounded, blooming youth, radiant and smiling. Later came the bearded Christ, but both were used symbolically; the first standing for the divine, the second for the human sufferer.

From the tenth century dates the beginning of a great change. As political and social conditions de-

teriorated, religion took on a more sombre cast; the midnight of the Dark Ages had settled down over Europe, and men were plunged into melancholy or despair; the Day of Judgment and the end of the world were expected soon. This gloom was reflected from the face of the pictured Christ. He is no longer young and smiling, but worn and sad, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The distressing and revolting incidents of his later life and of his death—kept in the background by the early Church—are frequently depicted and emphasized, with a morbid love of the horrible symptomatic of a brutalized society and a moribund Christianity.

The natural rebound from this depression carried Christian art to the other extreme, of the effeminate and negative, and there it still hangs. But in no one of these three phases of Christ portraiture does any intelligent effort seem to have been made to depict the Son of Man as he must, in the very nature of the case, have appeared to his contemporaries; the portraiture has been merely a reflex of the artist's fancy, or of religious and economic conditions.

But how is it possible for us to know anything about his appeaarnce? Just as we know about a great

many other things which we cannot see—by observing their effects. This method of reasoning from the known to the unknown is frequently used in science, and many valuable discoveries have been made in that way. Fifty-seven years ago one of the great heavenly bodies—Neptune—was discovered by observing its strong attraction for other members of the solar system; Christ is discovered by observing his wonderful influence over the men of his time. That influence he would never have won with a weak, womanish face. Contact with him, as with every strong soul, was a touchstone of character; infallibly he called forth the best or the worst, enthusiastic devotion or bitter hate.

But we are not confined to inferences from Christ's influence. From his character we know that his face was neither smooth nor vacant, but lined and stamped —not by worry, irritability, selfishness, and envy, like our faces—but by the strong lines of thought and thoughtfulness; of patiently endured toil, hardship and obloquy, of courage, serenity and self-reliance. So strong was the impress of character on his features, such the dignity of his bearing and the authority of his speech, that he looked fifteen years older than he

was; for the Jews said to him, *"Thou art not yet fifty years old."*

The most noticeable of Christ's features was his eye. The eye is the window of the soul, and from that window gazed forth, not only "the sweetest soul that ever looked with human eyes," but the bravest, strongest, calmest, noblest. The men who actually saw Christ speak often of his "look," as if it made a deep impression on them. He "looked round about" on the Pharisees "with anger" before speaking to the man with the withered hand; he "looked round" on the multitude before addressing his disciples; he "beheld" Jerusalem and wept over it; "beholding" the young man who ran to him, he loved him; he "turned and looked" upon Peter, and Peter went out and wept bitterly; and on another occasion, before rebuking Peter, he first turned and "looked round" upon his Disciples. As soon as Christ said to the officers and men who had come to seize him in the Garden, "I am he," the foremost recoiled and fell to the earth. What a terrible majesty there must have been in Christ's look at that moment to produce an effect so out of proportion to the import of his words!

And then there is that other scene fit for a painter

—if he could but catch the inspiration of it—sketched in barest outline for us by the Apostle Peter through the pen of Mark. All that he tells us is that Christ entered into the Temple, "and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out." Nothing was said, nothing done—just that majestic figure with the all-seeing eyes, standing alone amid the vast emptiness of the great building, whose black shadows steal stealthily toward him. That scene, so rich in beauty and suggestion, made such an impression on the beholder that the aged Disciple, drawing the description of his Master from memories dimmed by the lapse of half a century, felt that the sight of that solitary figure was one of the things worthy to be recalled and recorded! Some day some artist will be inspired to paint Christ Alone in the Temple.

It is to be borne in mind that the accounts which have come down to us from those who actually saw Christ are not histories or biographies at all, not even contemporaneous notes; but only rather rambling reminiscences culled from recollections of one whom they had loved and reverenced, and written from memory many years after he had passed from their sight.

Naturally, they gave prominence to those facts and incidents which had made the deepest impression on their minds at the time, and their frequent mention of Christ's look proves that it moved men strangely and strongly.

We know also that his look was wonderfully level, steady, and clear under all circumstances. Every one of us has some "mud at the bottom of his eye" —as Emerson says—and there are occasions when the steadiest eye cannot keep from wavering; for every man is, to a greater or less extent, a house divided against itself, he is not a perfect unit. The memory of evil done or the intention of evil to be done; conflicting desires, hopes, fears and indecisions; uncontrolled passions and appetites, all the pettiness and animalism of human nature, combine to dim the clearness of the outer eye as well as of the inner.

Christ's eye was as clear and steady as the soul behind it. His wonderful self-harmony gave him a power of concentration which made him at any instant an indivisible unit mentally, morally, and physically. Under any and all conditions he had himself perfectly in hand, every ounce of him was behind every blow he struck. That power of self-concentration has

been possessed by other world leaders, but never in such perfection of intensity and unity. The marvelous steady, penetrating light in that eye, which bore down every opposing gaze, was the index of a mind which went straight through all non-essentials to the core of every question; of a judgment which could not be perverted by policy, power, or pride; of a will which was centred on a single high purpose from which nothing could turn it aside.

It was a supreme unity of thought, feeling, judgment and will which gave Christ that surpassing wisdom and psychic power which astonished his contemporaries and still astonishes the world. Wisdom is the child, not of knowledge, but of power to perceive truth, to reach the heart of things. Christ was not learned in mere worldly knowledge, but any lack of that was compensated by his perfect perception of truth. But that perfect perception is conditioned on absolute self-honesty and purity; it cannot live in an atmosphere of delusion, conscious or unconscious. Little do we realize how sadly even our worldly insight is dimmed by self-delusions of all kinds; many of them indulged so long that they have become part and parcel of our very being, even their existence unsuspected by us.

Consequently a high power of truth perception is rare, rarer than is generally supposed. The countless vagaries seen in morals, society, business, politics, education and culture, as well as in religion, are not due to the absence of any standard or norm. In all things there is a norm, eternal and unchangeable, and they that seek it honestly shall find it; but every one of us is more or less dishonest, both objectively and subjectively. Our psychic vision is wilfully myopic, astigmatic, color-blind.

Every department of psychic activity has its special laws. Of these laws most men, peering through the meshes of the fleshly veil, have but dim perception at best; but here and there a genius arises for whom the veil seems rent in twain. There have been mathematical prodigies who were gifted with such an insight into the laws of numerical relations and values that they were able to skip all the slow and painful processes by which most men must calculate, and could leap as if by miracle to the most complicated results There have been musical prodigies who manifested a similar independence of usual methods, and could produce or reproduce exquisite harmonies as if by inspiration. So also art, language, and literature have had

their psychic seers. In short, there lies back of the merely objective and common-place, a subjective world whose glory and power are but faintly guessed.

To all this the moral sphere is no exception. Here Christ stood preeminent. His perception of, and obedience to, the laws of the moral world made him master of its mysteries.

Christ *looked before* he spoke. Therefore he was in no haste to speak; he understood the value of deliberateness and of the impressive pause. Only when roused by indignation, and when pouring hot shot into the Pharisees, his words were swift and straight as the explosions of a rapid-fire rifle.

His eyes must have been intensely bright and piercing, and the man on whom they were flashed felt that he was being looked through and through by a search-light; that his very soul was being radiographed by a spiritual x-ray. If there was any sham anywhere about that man, in that moment he knew that it was seen through, and the fire in Christ's eye withered him with the scorn he always had for humbug. The Pharisees never felt really comfortable in his presence. But the same eyes grew beautifully soft and winning when he was relieving suffering, and when he took

little children in his arms and blessed them.

Physical vigor is a very important factor of masculine personality, it is that which inspires confidence in a leader. Christ was of athletic physique, for he had worked all his life, and he lived in a climate presenting alternations of heat and cold, which, although not as extreme as ours, were favorable to health and vigor. Accustomed to climb the hills about Nazareth, he acquired the springy step and free, swinging stride of the mountaineer. As most of his traveling was done on foot, of course he was a great pedestrian.

When Christ met a man, that man, however dull, knew instinctively that he was in the presence of no ordinary person. There were the commanding pose and carriage, the piercing eye, the thoughtful brow; every movement, look, and gesture speaking of reserve power, physical, mental, and moral. To an ordinary man this first impression would be overawing, to an extraordinary man a challenge, were it not for the kindly smile which immediately softened the expression; the strong, resonant voice vibrating with sympathy and good fellowship; the words so fitly chosen for each one's case.

If it had been the custom in Palestine to shake hands

Christ would have grasped your hand firmly with a persuasive warmth, while those wonderful eyes read your very soul. For he loved to touch people. Everything human interested him. His regard for you had nothing impersonal or abstract about it, his first object was contact, solidarity. As a consequence he was continually laying his hands on people, especially the unfortunate and suffering, even touching the unspeakably unclean leper when there was no need of it.

No one can exert great personal influence who separates himself from his fellow-men. That is true even in these days of manifold means for reaching the public ear and eye, but two thousand years ago in the Orient there was no other way whatever. Of book knowledge among the common people there was practically none, information passed from mouth to mouth, as it does there to this day. Therefore Christ, student and profound thinker though he was, could not afford to be a recluse. No one ever mixed better than he with all classes and conditions. Human nature he read like an open book. There was no mask so perfect that he could not penetrate it, no sharpness or eccentricity for which he was not a match, no difficult situation to which he could not adapt himself. If he were in the

flesh to-day, he would be equally at his ease in the millionaire's mansion or in the slum tenement, in the the factory, or on the ranch.

This overflowing goodfellowship and sympathy of Christ's goes far toward explaining his tremendous personal influence. Occasionally we meet some one who has just a little of this endowment—a cordial, gracious dignity, which bears no sting of superiority while flattering every one by the honor of its acquaintance—and how fascinating it is! Even when we know there is a selfish motive back of it all, none of us can refuse to enjoy the delicate and delightful tribute to self-love when some one of importance manifests a kindly interest in us. No wonder that Christ, so manly, earnest, cordial, and absolutely unselfish, wielded a personal influence which often seemed hypnotic. When that wonderful voice called to men "Follow me," they abandoned everything on the instant—business, pleasure, home, family, friends—and followed!

CHAPTER III.

The Favor of Man.

"When one goes to Rome he sees only what he takes to Rome;" when one seeks the Divine he finds that which he brings to the Divine. Spiritual assimilation is proportional to spiritual development. We hold up our little pint pails to catch some of the Divinity which saturates the universe, and we receive just so much as we can hold and use—no more. Christ showed what capacity for receiving and what power for manifesting the Divine is possible to a perfect soul, even under human limitations.

As a child he "grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him."

His was a steady development, and from childhood up. There are various roads to knowledge and power, but for reaching wisdom there is but one way, and it is no royal road. Wisdom is the ripe fruit of experience, and experience comes only through living; not even Omnipotence can create wisdom *de novo*. Christ's exceptional powers and wisdom are proofs of exceptional ability and capacity, but of ability and capacity which made the most of every opportunity for development.

That the child Jesus should "wax strong in spirit" is just what we would expect, for strength of every kind especially marked his manhood. Here was no spasmodic, abnormal genius, but a continuous growth. The brief glimpse which we catch of him at the age of twelve agrees with this. He appears then as an exceptionally bright and self-reliant boy, who is not afraid to question the Doctors of the Law in the Temple, and who astonishes them by his understanding and his answers. Just how much, or how little, the astonishment of the wise men at the boy's precocity may signify, it is difficult to judge; bright children often astonish their elders. Certainly there is no evidence that Jesus at the age of twelve was any more excep-

tional than many well authenticated cases of early development.

Of the next eighteen years all we know from the record is that he kept on growing and developing. But what a character growth that was! Among other things he was acquiring during those years an infinite patience and a perfect self-control. Not the patience of weakness, which waits because it must; but the the patience of strength, which waits because it can afford to wait, because it is so strong. Weakness hurries, strength takes its time, Omnipotence takes eternity. To the average man thirty years of obscurity would seem to be a poor way of preparing for a great career; and doubtless it was a hard discipline for the young man, full of a young man's life and energy, conscious of exceptional powers and a great mission. But through all those years he held himself in check, waiting patiently for "the long result of time."

Another important qualification which Christ acquired during his preparatory experience was a profound knowledge of human nature. But how could a peasant in an obscure little town of Galilee acquire wide knowledge of men without traveling? Christ did not need to travel, for the reason that the world of his day traveled to him.

At that time Galilee was one of the most populous and cosmopolitan districts of the world. Its population of more than three millions included, besides Jews, thousands of Romans, Greeks, Syrians, Assyrians, Arabs, and Phœnicians. All this population was crowded into an area of about two thousand square miles; in other words, a district as small as Delaware was occupied by more than fifteen times as many inhabitants. The three great caravan routes between Syria, Egypt, and the Mediterranean ports passed close to Nazareth or directly through it. To Sepphoris, the capital of Galilee, was a journey of only three hours. Josephus states that Galilee was very fertile and full of plantations of all kinds, no part being left uncultivated; that more than two hundred cities and towns were filled with people, the smallest containing over fifteen thousand inhabitants; that the men were warlike and had military experience.

The whole district swarmed with Greek traders, while many Galileans traveled abroad and brought back the news and ideas of the outside world. Of course an intelligence so keen and a memory so retentive as Christ's did not fail to make the most of all these opportunities for acquiring ideas and informa-

tion. His native tongue was Aramaic, a mixture of Hebrew and Syrian, but there is reason for believing that he learned to speak Greek and to write Hebrew, which was already a dead language.

Judea was a comparatively dead district, devoted almost wholly to agriculture and sheep raising. To these industries Galilee added much commerce and manufacture and general hustle. The intelligence of the people was higher, and contact with foreigners had liberalized them, breaking down religious exclusiveness and bigotry. For these reasons the Judeans regarded the Galileans with mingled abhorrence and disdain, as having lost both their purity of blood and their ceremonial orthodoxy; they even carped at their pronunciation of certain words, although their own speech was far from perfect.

By growing up in Galilee, therefore, Christ escaped much which was objectionable, especially the fossilizing influence of the Temple. Had Joseph followed his first intention on the return from Egypt, the family would have gone back to Bethlehem, only a few miles from Jerusalem. There Christ would have grown up under the upas shade of the Temple, surrounded by a bigoted, fanatical populace which

looked up to the Scribes and Pharisees as possessed of boundless wisdom and divine authority. The endless puerilities which these ecclesiastics and lawyers enjoined upon the people are almost beyond belief; they must be read in the books devoted to that subject. Two examples will suffice.

Since the fourth commandment forbad labor on the Sabbath, the Scribes and Pharisees declared that anything which resembled labor was sinful on that day. Hence no one must step on the grass beside the path, lest he might thereby release some seeds of grass and so be guilty—constructively—of threshing on the Sabbath day. He must not even catch the inquisitive flea, lest he be guilty of hunting! There were over a thousand rules which they laid down, covering the minutest acts of daily life, and the breaking of any of them endangered the pious Jew's orthodoxy in this life and his salvation in the next. The Sabbath was a day of everlasting restrictions, observances, and dry religious services; and we may reasonably infer that the vigor of Christ's denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees may have been all the more hearty in consequence of his boyish recollections of the tiresome performances which they had required of him. It was on this

point of Sabbath observance that Christ frequently clashed with them, for he had no use for rules and regulations which interfered with the good of mankind. He rode rough-shod over them, to the pious horror of Pharisaical formalists.

The record which has come down to us of the "silent years" is tantalizingly brief, but we may be very sure that for Christ they were not idle years. From what we know of his character it is as positive as if actually recorded in the Gospels, that during all that time he traveled much from place to place in Galilee, with occasional trips to Jerusalem, meeting all sorts of people, acquiring all sorts of experience, and gaining that perfect familiarity with human feelings, prejudices, and springs of action which his later life disclosed.

We know also that Christ was a diligent and discriminating student during all those years, acquiring that familiarity with the Law and the Prophets which enabled him to meet the Scribes and Pharisees on their own ground and put them to rout. Of course the one hundred and thirty and odd quotations from and allusions to the Old Testament, given in the meagre records which we have, are but a fraction of what Christ actu-

ally quoted, but they suffice to prove that he was learned according to his day and nation. But he was much more than that. He was no mere memorizer of "proof-texts," with which to make a parade of knowledege like the pedants of every age; he possessed the rare faculty of being able to read between the lines and beneath the surface, the faculty of sympathetic insight.

In the first chapter Christ has been described as a leader of men, but he was also beloved of men. It was not his ambition to be merely a leader, but something far greater, higher, and more difficult—a Savior. Great leaders have generally been beloved, but not always. A leader like Frederick the Great or Ulysses S. Grant, for instance, may command the confidence and respect of his followers rather than win their affection.

Here we are not confined to induction from results. We have a distinct record to build upon, for we read that "he increased in favor with God and man." Now a great deal has been said about Christ's favor with God, but almost nothing about his favor with man, as if that were of no consequence. On the contrary, the favor with man was of prime importance, and that short phrase lets in a flood of light upon the silent,

unrecorded years of Christ's life. For how could any one be a Savior of men without the favor of men? Even the godliness of Christ were futile without the art to approach men and win them.

But how did Christ "increase in favor with man"? We need not go half-way around the world to Palestine, or back two thousand years for an answer; the human heart is essentially the same in all times and lands. Christ won the men of his day by precisely the same traits by which he would win Americans to-day if he were to walk our streets in human form.

What do all real men—and real women, for that matter—like best in a man? Manliness. And what is that? It is not easy of definition, for manliness is a complex concept, but the essential basis of it is courage, "nerve," "pluck," "sand," "grit."

Christ's courage no one would think for a moment of questioning. But courage is a strange composite. It may be physical or moral, impetuous or deliberate; and the man possessing one kind of courage is often destitute of the other kinds. The man who can calmly face bullets or death by torture often cannot say No to the sparkle in the wine cup or in a woman's eye; another will risk death by fire or flood for strangers,

and then go home and cowardly abuse a wife and children; still another will face wild beasts and flee from pestilence. There is the courage which can be heroic if it can act instantly, with no time to think, and there is the courage which forces the flinching flesh with blanched face and shaking knees up to the sacrifice. On the other hand, moral courage sufficient to withstand all the wiles of the Devil may quail ignominiously at sight of the dentist's forceps.

Christ's manliness compassed every kind of courage, moral and physical. We can but faintly realize what a test of courage it was for him to face down the members of the Sanhedrim, to stand alone against all the power and prestige of the great men of his nation and all the public opinion of his time; to walk about unarmed and unprotected against any stealthy dagger which might so easily be hired against him by those whom he defied and exasperated to the last degree; and, finally, to place himself deliberately in the power of those who thirsted for his blood. Since his death many have been inspired to emulate his heroism, but none could surpass it.

What other characteristics win "favor with man"? Camaraderie, good-fellowship. This concept also con-

notes many things—close personal association, sympathy, generosity, large-heartedness, unassuming equality, loyalty through thick and thin, mutual forbearance, cheerful sociability—the list is long, but every one is included in a man's idea of comradeship. With his comrade, his "partner," his "bunkie," the roughest man will share his last morsel, for him he will die.

Of Christ's camaraderie there is abundant evidence in the story of his life. He got as close to people as he could, especially ordinary people for whom no one else seemed to care. For all trouble or suffering he overflowed with an inexhaustible compassion and sympathy, and particularly for the man or woman whom every one else was willing to help down-hill with a kick. He was generous to the last degree, permitting both friends and strangers to make large drafts upon his time and strength. Often homeless and penniless, always regardless of self, seeking only to do good, Christ lived a life of such unselfish devotion as even the most carping critics have never dared to accuse of self-interest. Other great religious leaders —Buddha, Confucius, Mahomet—have made wonderful impressions on large masses of mankind, but less

by personal influence than by doctrines peculiarly adapted to the desires or temperaments of their followers; but Christ, preaching a painful and distasteful doctrine, won his way by a sympathetic, noble fellowship. How much that means! Hard as it is for us to be good, how much easier it often is to be good than to be frankly democratic!

There were many other ways by which Christ "increased in favor with man." He was considerate of others; therefore there are some things which we know he did *not* do. We may be sure that he did not monopolize the conversation, nor insist on his opinion offensively, nor interrupt the one who was speaking. He was not everlastingly preaching and pointing a moral, in season and out; he was a good listener and answered to the point; you knew that he had heard what you said and given it full consideration even when he differed. No worthy soul, however humble, found any obstacle to uttering itself freely to that kindly attentive ear. But it went no further, for of course Christ never gossiped. If he felt obliged to criticise any one, he said it to his face like a man, not behind his back.

Christ was not gloomy because he was good. We

have no record that he either laughed or smiled, but his expression of face must have been pleasant and often smiling, for he loved little children and liked to take them in his arms. Women also were attracted to him. Although he bore a load, increasing with every year, which was enough to crush most men, he was always quick in sympathy with all that was bright and beautiful in nature or human life. Doubtless he was a welcome guest at many other scenes of festivity besides the wedding at Cana. A Jewish wedding was no place for a dismal face, for it meant three to seven days of eating, drinking, dancing, and general jollification.

No doubt Christ was delightful company in times of relaxation, especially with those he loved—Lazarus, John, Mary and Martha—possessing the double charm of a strong nature which loves to please. He was quick to praise where praise was deserved, and he complimented without flattering. Too manly to bear grudges, he did not let his fierce tilts with the Pharisees stand in the way of accepting invitations to dine with some of them; and so sociable was he with all classes that his enemies taunted him with it, but he turned the taunt back upon its source with his usual keenness

and force. In short, Christ was the ideal of the true gentleman, displaying that happy combination which is so difficult, of dignity and humility; the type of gentleman which is the same the world over, always instinctively recognized, and either loved or hated.

But a gentleman is not always or necessarily a gentle man, even if that were the derivation of the word, as some mistakenly suppose. While he is cordial and hearty, he is never mushy, does not slop over. You know instinctively that you do not know him, for all his seeming frankness. While he gives you freely so much of himself as you are entitled to, according to your degree of intimacy, there is an invisible barrier to any intrusion. His inmost personality is a Holy of Holies which he never opens, and you respect him for respecting it; while he shuts that inner door in your face, you like him all the better if he does it kindly. That Christ, with all his winning openness, possessed ample capacity for reserve at the right time is evident. He did not believe, any more than we do, in wearing the heart upon the sleeve for daws to peck at. "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." He knew when and how to rebuke undue familiarity, and he did it with a word

so scathing or a glance so terrible that the presumptuous one shrank back speechless. He was equally master of the retort courteous and the retort cutting.

Like all rare and noble natures Christ suffered from isolation, from the lack of human sympathy and appreciation; except in prayer he found no free outlet for all that was in his heart and mind. Even with the Twelve he must be circumspect. "I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now."

Why is it that we never think of Christ as a Jew? Because he was more Occidental than Oriental, and more cosmopolitan than either. Born of a race which has always been characterized by great excitability and volubility, he was more like the best type of the modern Anglo-Saxon in his perfect self-command, his cool, steady eye, his capacity for reticence, and his love of brevity. The world was already sufficiently familiar with the human idea of a gentleman—power, greed, lust, and cruelty, thinly veneered with worldly polish—Christ held up God's idea of a gentleman.

CHAPTER IV.

Christ as a Practical Philosopher.

The superlatively religious value of Christ's teaching has quite overshadowed its purely philosophical value and worldly wisdom. He expressed with consummate skill and insight the maxims and principles which men of affairs have always followed, and more or less consciously recognized; which are essential for true success in anything, business, society, politics, or pleasure. Almost everything Christ said was capable of two constructions—one self-evident and of worldly application, the other lying back of that and spiritual. Our gaze has been so fixed on the latter that the former has been largely overlooked.

Most people seem quite unconscious of this fact. They concede that Christ was very good, of course, but when it comes to practical affairs they think him not at all up to date. So they go on learning, generally by hard knocks and expensive experience, the same worldly wisdom which he told them two thousand years ago. The fact is that there is no wise man —it matters not whether he be Christian, or infidel, theist or atheist, Hindu, Chinaman, or Turk; or what the form in which he puts his rules of conduct— who goes through life without following Christ's practical philosophy.

When we consider the narrow horizon of the wisest men of his day; the absence of all systematic knowledge, scientific, social or political; and the limitations of his personal experience, Christ manifests a wonderful insight into the real nature of things. His mind was preeminently comprehensive, his thought tended to wide generalizations, to the induction of underlying principles from observed facts. Particularizing he usually left to others. His mental attitude was just the opposite of that which then prevailed, and this also placed him far in advance of his age. At the same time he avoided the philosopher's usual weakness

by being intensely practical. He discerned clearly, and expressed in terse terms, social and political principles which the world has either recently adopted or is still groping after.

For instance, we pride ourselves on having achieved the political wisdom of an absolute divorce of Church and State. It has required centuries of bloodshed and misery to bring a portion of the race to that stage of evolution, but there is no occasion to plume ourselves on being particularly "advanced." We have simply caught up at last with Christ's far seeing maxim: "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This political perspicacity appears all the more remarkable when we reflect that Christ was born and brought up under a theocracy, and that a close union of Church and State had been the almost universal rule of governments.

Also, we pride ourselves on our strenuosity, our motto is Get there. Within limits that is a good thing, although there is always danger of overleaping the limits. Christ believed in Get there. He taught it and practiced it. Like all positive, energetic characters, he had a special liking for the men

who do things. That is the reason why the "Dauntless Three" were his chosen companions, as explained already in detail in chapter first. "Seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Every man among men has to knock, and knock hard. The way to get into business, into politics, into society, is to knock; to knock so hard as to make the people on the inside believe that you mean to knock the door down. Then they will let you in on the ground floor.

But knocking and hustling and grabbing may easily go so far as to become vicious, and already the truly wise men are looking for a corrective. A few, too few, have made a great discovery—that the best remedy for cutthroat competition, strikes and lockouts and industrial war, class hate, and corporate and individual greed, is simply that every man should treat all others as he would be treated by them. What a discovery! Some daring innovators have actually applied this discovery successfully in business, but thus far, sad to say, they are the exceptions. The indications are that the deadlock between employers and employes and the long suffering public will continue to grow worse, until both Capital and Labor shall be forced by business necessity, or by law, to put in practice the prin-

ciple of that Golden Rule which the Christian world has applauded and neglected for twenty centuries.

Industrially we are sadly adrift, groping in the fog for a firm anchorage to keep us off the rocks. Many of our industrial and social maxims which were long considered politico-economic axioms have gone to smash. For instance, free competition did very well so long as there was some degree of equality between the competitors; but now that enormous combinations of capital have taken advantage of the right of competition to undersell and drive out all weaker rivals, we are not so much in love with *laissez faire*. Now we call it cutthroat monopoly, and are hunting for a remedy.

Similarly, the ancient and honorable right of a man to "do what he will with his own"—his own child, horse, coal, oil, land, or money—is rapidly being restricted by the opposing rights of the child, of the horse, and of the community. Little by little the public is being educated up to the point of perceiving the obligation resting on every man to be more than legally honest with his fellowman. Cutthroat competition is the modern reincarnation of Cain, who asked Am I my brother's keeper? Honesty has been ex-

tolled into a fetich, as if the utmost which ought to be expected or required of a man in his business dealings were that he should not be guilty of downright swindling! Now the fact is that mere honesty is so negative and cold-blooded as hardly to merit being called a virtue; a man may be spotlessly honest and yet be a public vampire.

Slowly and tentatively we are drawing nearer to a better idea of rights, and some time the popular feeling will crystallize into laws which will forbid any action whatever, whether by an individual, trades-union, corporation, or trust, which injures the community or oppresses any of its members. Already we are well on the way. For all inter-state commerce acts, all laws and decisions against rebates, discrimmination in rates, child labor, maximum hours and minimum wages, unsanitary and dangerous conditions, "picketing," boycotts and trade conspiracies, are tacit acknowledgements of a new industrial principle. They cannot be justified under a freely competitive regime.

This transition to a new principle not yet fully recognized or accepted gives rise to much confusion of thought and speech. Perceiving that, as a measure of self-preservation, society must interfere to protect

men from each other, and even from themselves, the public feels forced to condone various arbitrary legal expedients, often squinting strongly toward paternalism and socialism. In time a new and better order will be worked out from this disorder.

But "the good of the community," or "the greatest good of the greatest number," is not after all the ultimate social and industrial principle. Only another makeshift, another step in evolutionary progress, it nevertheless serves the purpose of paving the way for the true principle, the one which Christ laid down. Even now, amid all the greed and heartlessness of competition, there are signs of that good time coming.

It is quite the fashion of moralists to decry the degeneracy of modern manners. By an odd paradox this is true socially, but not commercially. The cheering fact is that stress of business competition has given the courteous businessman so great an advantage over his discourteous rivals, that an improvement has been brought about in commercial manners within two decades which is as marvelous as it is delightful. Perfect drawing-room manners are now the rule in first-class stores and offices, and largely elsewhere. Polite grocers, butchers, and even icemen are not unknown!

Also many commercial houses have been driven by the spur of business rivalry to realize that more money can be made in the end by building up and maintaining a reputation for perfect reliability and for liberal treatment of customers. In short, public "good will" has come to be recognized as a valuable business asset, and is sometimes bought and sold as such. Many firms request customers to report any incivility or inattention, and even "soulless corporations" offer prizes to their employes for the best records in serving the public.

Best of all, many employers are sparing neither thought nor expense in improving the physical, moral, and educational condition of their employes, thus discharging the moral obligation which strength owes to weakness. Of course, the motive back of all these efforts to serve others is often a wise selfishness, but let us not be too critical. They are none too many, whatever the motive, and they give us a glad foretaste of the real Golden Age which is to come—the age of the Golden Rule. Out of evil comes good in the fullness of time. Think what a Millennial Day will dawn when these exceptions shall have become the rule; when all shall have come to recognize and practice

the wisdom of Christ's social and industrial philosophy; when every one, rich and poor, shall have joined the Universal Brotherhood in which each shall honestly strive to do as he would be done by!

Another industrial, and also international, "discovery" is compromise and arbitration. At last a small part of the world has learned, at a staggering cost of blood and treasure, that it is better to repress the natural man's inclination to fight it out, and to come to an understanding. "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him."

Corruption in office is as old as government. From the king down to his pettiest official it was the immemorial custom to steal everything which it was safe to steal. Naturally moralists assumed that this was one of the vices inherent in one-man government, in which the people had no voice. When, therefore, the Republic of the United States was started the world looked hopefully for a new heavens and a new earth. They said, Now we shall see how different it will be when the men who pay the taxes choose the officials to disburse the taxes!

While the Republic was young it walked fairly straight in the narrow path which it had learned in

the school of poverty and adversity. But now it has waxed rich and strong, and what do we see? Corruption which would fill Catiline or Nero with astonishment and envy, stealing and bribery right and left; scandal follows scandal, treading on each others' heels. Our cities are systematically plundered of such loot as no despot ever dreamed of. Rings and bosses everywhere, rings within rings, big bosses and little, all stealing, stealing—the shrewdest brains in the nation given over to the fine art of stealing under cover of the law. Officials stand with one hand in the public treasury or the trades-union fund, and with the other held out to the corporation, the contractor, and the Magdalen. The newspapers are so full of it that it seems as if every one in official position, from the hundred-thousand-dollars president of a trust to the cheapest walking-delegate, was "out for the stuff, and didn't care who knew it." Exposure is losing its terrors, for the public conscience seems narcotized. What has become of our boasted self-government? Where can we find bed-rock on which to brace up the crumbling structure?

The trouble is that we have put our trust in institutions and constitutions and by-laws, and have neg-

lected the plain principles which Christ laid down for us. The trouble is that there is no sense of moral responsibility in either electors or elected. What, then, have we a right to expect? "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" For decades now we have been allowing children to grow up with almost no moral or religious instruction, and this is the harvest. If a boy grows up to be a "smart" man or "a good fellow", no inquiry is made in regard to his moral principles. But "an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil."

There is a strong disposition to gloss over the hideousness of this political and commercial corruption by giving it various fancy names. Stealing is too harsh a word to apply to the transactions of highly respectable gentlemen, often church members, Sunday-school superintendents, and philanthropists; so we substitute a large variety of ingenious euphemisms—"stock-watering," "fine financiering," "merging," gentlemen's agreements," "converting," "doing the right thing," "grafting," etc., etc. But fine phrases can never make the acquisition of something valuable, without rendering an honest and honorable equivalent, to be anything but stealing. To avoid confusion of

moral values, especially in the minds of the young, it is of the highest importance that all honest people should steadily reject all these verbal subterfuges and insist on using the plain Anglo-Saxon word for it. No matter what their alleged respectability may be, no matter what sops they may throw to the public conscience in the way of educational or benevolent endowments, all men who attain wealth or position by illegal or unfair methods should be persistently held up to public condemnation as Thieves. Certain periodicals are doing a grand and fearless work along this line. Will the public do its share?

That was Christ's way of dealing with the "grafters" of his day, and we cannot improve on it. Unless we are willing to do as he did, we need not look for any improvement, and can scarcely claim that we really desire it. The only condemnation which these high-toned thieves fear is *social ostracism.* If every decent man and woman would to-morrow strike from their calling and invitation lists the names of all known thieves and disreputables and of their families, this rising tide of corruption would at once begin to ebb. Stringent laws and reform movements are idle so long as public opinion condones. It rests with the

decent and honest portion of the community to apply the remedy—moral education of the young, social ostracism of the thieves.

Christ was eminently practical. He had one simple test, and only one, for discriminating between good and evil. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

But we know better now. We also have a simple and infallible test—"Does it pay? A church may righteously run raffles, or some other form of gambling, because it is such an easy way of raising money for "the good cause"; and Christian ladies may play cards for money, if only the stakes go to "some worthy charity"; although every one knows that the evil fruits of gambling are everywhere about us in lost honor and ruined homes. Reputable people, even churches and universities, may derive revenues from the rent of buildings which are used for debauching men and women, or from filthy rookeries which are nurseries of disease, crime, and misery, because such real estate "pays." Little children, scarcely able to walk, work twelve or fourteen hours, some of them all night, in order that highly respectable gentlemen may grab a

few more dirty dollars. But, then, it "pays." Does it? "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

The strain of the strenuous life tends to worry, nervous prostration, and premature collapse. Therefore some of our wise men and women said, Go to; this is an evil thing, we will stop worrying. And so they started "don't worry clubs," and congratulated themselves on being very bright and up-to-date.

Quite the contrary; Christ founded the first don't worry club. "Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow;" "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." He did not deny the reality of trouble, he simply said Don't worry about it.

But does not that prove too much; was not that idea centuries older than Christ? It is true that Buddha, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, and all the company of ancient sages had inculcated the patient endurance of trouble; but always from the stoical standpoint. "Grin and bear it because you can't help yourself," was really the best consolation they had to offer distressed humanity, even though they talked vaguely about the

rewards of the gods. Any one who has had real trouble knows how filling that kind of consolation is.

Christ took this dead idea and breathed into it the breath of life, as he did with so many other ideas. He was the founder of the first real don't worry club, because he was the first one to point out a good and sufficient basis for it—"For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Without such a belief it is impossible to stop worrying in times of real distress. However much you may exercise self-control and refuse to think about your troubles, you cannot stop the subconscious worry which flows on in spite of you day and night, a subterranean river which persistently undermines your peace and efficiency.

A form of worry which is quite familiar is that of the over-anxious housewife. It is especially in evidence when "company" is expected, the hostess frets herself into a condition bordering on hysteria for fear her guests will not be made comfortable; which often defeats itself by making them decidedly uncomfortable. Poor Martha, "cumbered about much serving", was a type of the not infrequent woman whose domestic and personal affairs look bigger to her than everything

else, even her own best interests.

One of the hardest things in life for every one is to strike just the right balance between spiritual and material values. Neither should be neglected, neither overdone. There will always be need of drudgery done, of care carried by some one, and it will always be hard for that one to hold to a true perspective. Whether or no Mary should have been helping her sister get dinner instead of listening to the words of the Master, is an open question; but there can be no question of the inexcusable rudeness and unreasonableness of Martha in trying to call Christ to account for Mary's alleged shortcomings. "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me!" Martha was one of the numerous women with "a passion for fixing responsibility"—as Mr. W. D. Howells neatly puts it—and even Christ himself was not immune from a woman's tongue, on this and other occasions. He "was in all points tempted like as we are."

One of the sad sights of life is a woman who has forgotten to be charming and has not learned to be wise. When a Martha-woman has a grievance she must air it at any cost and try to put the blame on some one

else; even at the cost of alienating the sympathy she craves. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Few of the ideas, reforms, and discoveries which have helped the world forward would ever have seen the light if the men who travailed with them had taken counsel of their families. Here and there a wife has backed her husband with unwavering faith, sympathy, and encouragement through all the dark days of compelling the world's recognition; but usually he has been obliged to add her disapproval and dissatisfaction to the already heavy burden of popular indifference.

Although Christ never married, he knew the chastening experiences of married life. In all probability the death of his father left him, as the oldest child, to be the head of a family of at least eight members, consisting of his mother and several brothers and sisters. That some of them, perhaps all, regarded him as an impractical visionary, even crazy; and that they set out to put him under lock and key, we know from the record. One of George Eliot's philistine characters says,

"Sane people do as their neighbors do." All Christ's family except himself was "sane" and commonplace.

Like many another man of family he went through the bitter experience of finding himself compelled to close his ears to the voices of those whom he loved and would have preferred first of all to please; to go his own way and leave them to go theirs. The same is true in small things as in great, and many a man finds an echo in his heart to the terse words with which Christ summed up his own family experience—"A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house."

Slowly, very slowly, the most enlightened of mankind are emerging from the barbaric worship of violence and rapacity, and are beginning to recognize the Kingship of Service. While we bow outwardly to kings, presidents, governors and others in authority, we pay our respect to the office and not to the official, unless he has proved himself worthy by true service. Our real respect and real allegiance go out to the uncrowned kings and queens who have earned their title by benefits conferred upon humanity. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Not infrequently the newspapers announce the collapse of some prominent business man simply because he undertook too many things. Either his employers are dissatisfied because they feel that he is neglecting their interests, or his health gives way under the strain of watching too many irons in the fire at the same time. He might have avoided all that by remembering that "no man can serve two masters."

Another man sets his heart on getting rich at any cost, even if he has to throttle conscience in the process, and starve his nobler nature. He succeeds in doing both, and while the foolish are envying his wealth wise men pity him, for his higher nature is dead, he is a spiritual leper, a walking corpse. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Now he thinks it is time for him to enjoy life, but he is dismayed to find it impossible. What he eats gives him the horrors of indigestion, travel is a bore; art, music, literature, cultured society are sealed books; the present is a dreary blank, the future an awful dread. Too late he learns that the life is more than meat and the body than raiment, "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." "For what is a man profited, if he shall

gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" This is not religion especially; it is a matter of common observation, and should be a matter of common sense.

In desperation this mental and moral bankrupt plunges back into business to escape from himself; back to the dollar-chasing which is the only thing he can understand or enjoy. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Tell me what a man loves, and I will tell you what he is.

Many people go through life self-deceived. From stubbornness and conceit they shut their eyes to the lessons of experience, and as the years go by they become fixed in a lot of false notions about men and things. For such there is no hope and no remedy. For the man, or woman, who is teachable, who is anxious to learn the lesson of life, there is always hope; but for the smart Aleck who knows it all there is nothing but "the whips and scorns of time." "If, therefore, the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Nothing succeeds like success. With wonder and envy men watch the dollars roll in on some man in a perfect flood, while they themselves are forced into bankruptcy. Having made a lucky strike of some

kind, his money seems to breed money, power attracts more power, all he has to do is to sit back and see the tide of prosperity roll in. It seems hard and unjust, but it is nothing new. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

One of the triumphs of modern sociology is charity organization. Among its leading features is the abolition of the pernicious old custom of indiscriminate alms-giving which has bred paupers for centuries, and the substituting therefor of "friendly visiting," the personal inspection of the unfortunate and vicious in their evil environment. In this certainly sociology is on the right track, although a little late, for "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, ... for I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Between the intemperate zeal of many reformers and the apathy of the general public the world's reformation progresses discouragingly slow. It is impossible to make some people see that the excellence of a proposed reform, and the ardor of their zeal for it, do

not justify them in starting in to smash things. They are quite as likely to do harm as good. It is less spectacular and exhilarating, but far more effective, to restrain impatience and wait until the time is ripe for strong measures. "Let both grow together until the harvest," "lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them."

Few things will prevent success in any direction more surely than the habit of criticising one's neighbors publicly. That the criticism is just does not mend matters, but makes them worse; so much the more bitterly will the criticism be resented, and so much the more eagerly will the first opportunity for revenge be seized. Of course that is all wrong, but few have reached the spiritual development of being willing to have attention called to their own shortcomings. Sooner or later we learn by experience, if we are wise, to "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

But no one can refrain from forming his private judgments, even if he would. We are passing judgment all the time upon everything and everybody we see or hear of; and upon these little accretions of judgment

are built the opinions and prejudices which inspire our actions, and so mold our characters and destiny. How important, then, that all our judgments should be well considered, based upon facts and not fancies, upon inner realities and not external appearances. At all hazards keep clear the inner eye. The so-called intuitions of childhood are explained by the fact that a little child has not yet become sophisticated to the folly of basing its estimates of people upon the value of jewels and clothing, of houses and lands; of being captivated by politic smiles and cooing compliments; of being impressed by solemn deportment or a consequential bearing. Neither was Christ. "Judge not according to the appearance;" "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

Every really honest man hates humbug. By the same token every humbug has an inveterate antipathy to whatever is straightforward, manly and clean-cut. Since he is a cheat, both inside and out, of course he likes cheats. Christ was thoroughly honest; not only with others, but above all with himself. No wonder that he and the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees in general could never mix. The chasm between them

was not primarily religious or political, it was fundamental; an absolute incompatibility of temperament.

There was nothing which Christ detested more intensely than humbug, he hated it worse than sin, and there every honest man stands with him. Repeatedly did he express his scorn of it, as in the parable of the self-sufficient critic with a beam in his own eye who volunteered to take the mote out of his brother's eye. Especially did the humbug of the Scribes and Pharisees arouse Christ's indignation, for in them he recognized a hierarchical octopus which, having fastened its tentacles upon every member of the body politic, was sucking all sincerity of religious, moral, and social life out of the nation. They, and not the Romans, constituted the real national menace. At last his indignation burst its banks in that torrent of denunciation—"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

These illustrations of Christ's practical philosophy might be continued indefinitely, for his sayings are full of them, and nearly every one of his twenty-nine parables teaches worldly as well as unwordly wisdom.

Generally the practical application is on the surface, but sometimes it must be studied out. Christ loved to hit people with an epigram, and then leave them to study over it. Many of his pithy sayings are so excellent that they have always held an honored place in secular literature, and always will so long as a virile literary taste survives.

CHAPTER V.

On the Heights.

Important as is association with fellowmen, a well-rounded character can never be developed in the market-place only. There must be times of withdrawal from all things human, seasons of deep communion with nature, self, and the Infinite, before the inner fountains will gush forth which refresh and clarify the spirit. Different angles of view are essential to correct perspective.

One who has always dwelt in the plain cannot appreciate the uplift of a mountain view. To stand on "the rim of the world," to see far below great cities like heaps and men like ants, to see nothing above but boundless blue, is to be alone with God and his Universe, to feel the pettiness of the plain fall away and

to be expanded by something of the largeness of the Divine thought and purpose! There man can think some of God's thoughts after him. Men of the hill-country are bold, strong, silent men.

On the hill-tops around Nazareth the young Christ nourished a youth sublime. Often in later life he withdrew into a mountain, for there, better than on the plain, his troubled spirit sought and found repose. By this alternation of society and solitude he maintained a healthful balance between thought and action, between theory and practice. The trouble with the men who do things is that they do not take time to think, for looking at things in the large, for tracing and applying universal principles. On the other hand, the man of thought is too academic, he does not rub elbows enough, he is all theory and no application. Each is needed as a corrective to the other.

Manhood only intensified Christ's passion for a free, wide horizon. When he changed his dwelling-place to Capernaum, he soon found new "altar stairs which sloped through darkness up to God." A mountain distant a few miles from Capernaum—perhaps Mount Hattin—became his favorite retreat, and there he delivered many discourses to his disciples, including the

Beatitudes. There, too, he fought out many of the soul conflicts which came so thickly in the latter months.

This love of being on the heights was the natural heritage of a boy born and bred in a hill-country. Nazareth nestled on the slope of a hill, looking southward into a beautiful valley surrounded by many similar hills. In Christ's time a lovelier spot could hardly be found. It was a valley of vineyards and gardens, of orchards of olive, fig, and palm, gorgeous with the white and scarlet blossoms of pomegranate and orange; of fields of billowing grain, and meadows carpeted with the brightest of wild flowers, whose perfume scented the breeze. So prodigal was nature that every month in season she flung upon the fields a new riot of color, while the air was vocal with the notes of countless birds of brilliant plumage. Browsing flocks dotted the hillsides, and the land "flowed with milk and honey" and oil. No wonder that Christ loved to weave his stories about the flowers of the field and the birds of the air.

But best of all he loved to climb the hill behind his home and get the view. As he stood there, 400 feet above Nazareth and 1,600 feet above the sea, his eye

swept a scene to stir the dullest heart; what then must have been the emotions and aspirations which fired his fervid young soul! To the northwest his eye caught the blue glint of the Mediterranean; to the east the clear waters of the Sea of Tiberias mirrored back the forests, hills, and wooded glens which rimmed it round. On the north Mount Hermon reared its ever hoary head 10,000 feet, and the cedars of Lebanon "shook." Mount Hermon carries—as the Arab proverb says—"winter on its head, spring on its shoulders,and harvest in its bosom; while summer sleeps at its feet."

But lovely as was the face of nature to the outer eye, for the inner eye there was a richer feast. What a wealth of historical and religious association filled the imagination of the young Israelite as he swept this view, in which every plain, hill, and valley spoke to him of events memorable in the history of his race. His feelings were those of the modern scholar who stands on the Acropolis or the Capitoline, only tenfold intensified by patriotic pride.

Compared with the Palestine of that day we are the veriest parvenus. The Hebrews had occupied their country three and a half times as long as the white

man has been in America. Jerusalem was then two or three times as old as the "Eternal City," and Josephus declares that a city had been standing on the site of Jerusalem for more than twenty-one centuries. All those centuries had been packed full of history, full of wars and disasters, full of victory and defeat.

Standing on the Galilean hills Christ saw, stretching far to the south, fifteen miles long by four to fourteen miles wide, the great plain of Esdraelon, a battle-ground for centuries. Across it Midianite and Amalekite, Syrian and Philistine had pursued or been pursued by the hosts of Israel; now impartial nature had decorated all their graves with garlands of fair flowers. Many times, also, had its turf been pressed by the feet of Samuel and David, of Elijah and Elisha.

Then turning to the southwest the young man's eye caught Mount Gilboa, where the life of the gifted but headstrong King of Israel had gone out in disaster and disgrace; there also had perished Jonathan, beloved of David.

Those ancient battles were no skirmishes; on the contrary, they were bloody beyond our power of realization, they were human shambles. Many imagine that the deadly precision and extreme range of modern

rifles has greatly increased the bloodshed of battle; the fact is just the opposite. There are several reasons for this apparent paradox, and one is the vast numbers of men engaged on both sides in ancient conflicts. In Saul's first battle, when he saved the men of Jabesh-Gilead from the Ammonites, the grand total gathered to repel the invaders was 350,000 Assuming that the army of the Ammonites was of nearly equal size, we have in that battle nearly three-quarters of a million men engaged in flying furiously at each others' throats—enough to furnish five Waterloos or five Gettysburgs! Although no statement is given of the loss of life in that battle, it must have been terrific, for the Ammonites were so scattered that no two of them were left together.

Then south of Gilboa was seen Mount Ephraim, where Israel had suffered a terrible disaster, more than nine centuries before Christ's time, at the hands of the men of Judah. On that occasion 1,200,000 men were zealous in the work of mutual extermination, and Israel lost 500,000 dead out of 800,000. In the course of another "unpleasantness," 120,000 of the men of Judah fell dead in one day. Engagements between the Tribes in which one side lost 25,000 killed

were frequent and ordinary affairs.

Of course these men were not all trained troops, but vast hordes of furious fighters, each man hacking away until he was cut down in hand to hand butchery. Such battles were made up of a countless number of desperate duels, but the carnage of the battle proper was exceeded by that of the rout. When at last one side gave way, it resolved itself into a frantic, fleeing mob, trampling more under foot than the pursuers were able to cut down with their best efforts. Of course, also, the figures given are only approximate, but they are sufficient to prove what serious affairs those ancient battles were, and how much modern methods and weapons have done to diminish the carnage of war.

That Christ, even as a boy, was familiar with these and other leading events in his country's history, we may be sure. It is an unforunate paradox that the children who have the greatest advantages in books and instruction are least apt to be familiar with the history of their own country. It is among primitive peoples, whose thoughts and interests are not complex, whose story is passed from father to son during the long leisure hours of evening and of winter, that

we find that intense patriotic pride in the deeds of ancestors which makes national history more fascinating than any fiction to the eager young imagination. The lively mind and retentive memory of the Jewish lad would never let slip any story which he had once heard of the grand old days.

Of education, as we conceive it, the young Jesus knew nearly nothing. In the first place, his father was a poor peasant, a worker in wood; either with plane or saw, or perhaps as a wood carver; for trades were not specialized then as now. Whatever the work was, all hands were needed to help on it, and the prospective preacher was early called upon to do his share. When he could be spared from work the boy had the same educational advantages, and disadvantages, as the other boys of Israel. Every village had its parochial school, in which the local rabbi taught reading and ciphering; perhaps a little Jewish history and some of the requirements of the religious law. On the Sabbath the lad sat in the synagogue and heard the Law and the Prophets read, and then perfunctorily and uselessly expounded by the rabbi. This, at the utmost, was the extent of his public education; supplemented, however, by some home instruction. At his

father's or mother's knee he learned many Scripture texts, for the Jews then, as now, gave close personal attention to the education of their children. But whatever else he was to know he was obliged to find for himself, either in his own heart or in the world about him.

That this apparent meagreness of educational opportunity was really no handicap we know from the lives of the thousands of poor boys who have graduated from the little red school-house into presidencies, pastorates, and prominent public positions of all kinds. Our young friend was a bright boy, precocious in perception, imagination, thought and feeling; but not precocious in the sense of being an "infant phenomenon." He was a strong, healthy, normal boy with a good appetite, and a sound sleeper.

In one way, at least, his environment was highly favorable to the development of a sturdy character —he was one of a large family. The best preparation for the catch-as-catch-can of adult life is the training of family life, where each learns to stand for himself with due regard for the rights of others; it is the first lesson in life's primer. If our young preacher had any tendency to be visionary, poverty, work and

the usual freedom of brothers and sisters from any false delicacy and reserve in criticism and admonition, combined to eliminate such tendencies from his character. This early close contact with the life of the common people was the source of that homely wit and wisdom, and that comprehension of their view of things, which enabled him to get so close to them in his ministry.

As he grew older he attended the meetings of the wise men of his village, after the dismissal of the congregation from the synagogue. They met regularly for reading and discussion of the Scriptures; an opportunity which he would be sure not to neglect. By availing himself of every suitable opportunity Christ acquired that wonderful skill in debate and that perfection of expression which characterized all his language. When we reflect that we have knowledge of his sayings only indirectly though the pens of those who wrote from memory or hearsay, much of course being lost in the process of transmission, it becomes all the more remarkable that most of his utterances, even the most extemporaneous, have all the finish of premeditated composition. Such perfection proves practice.

Under these conditions, then, the thought and feeling of the Supreme Preacher shaped themselves. No one has ever lived who had better right to the honored title of "self-made." Unaided, nay hindered, by the opinions and sentiments of those about him; obliged to support himself by manual toil, and probably his mother also after Joseph's death, he nevertheless found time and opportunity to study deeply the problems of life, seeking the solution for which the best minds of all ages had been groping.

Christ found the religious field already occupied by three chief claimants of authority. Outside of the Jewish nation was Paganism, universal and myriad; inside was the Mosaic Law and the Pharisaic Tradition. With the first and last he could have nothing in common; the one outraged decency, the other common sense. Therefore on the Mosaic Law as a foundation Christ proceeded to build his superstructure of Christianity, retaining essentials, rejecting non-essentials.

Studying the Law profoundly, penetrating the ceremonial husk to the inner truth, he grasped eternal verities; he perceived that, in the process of evolution from the lower and simpler to the higher and more

complex, the Law could and should be superseded by something nobler, more divine. The Mosaic Law was a code of prohibitions; he would substitute for its negative morality a positive purity. Mere respectability was a sham. The true basis of morality was that man should refrain from sin, not through fear of consequences, but because he hated sin.

The Law was objective and particular, dealing with minutiæ of outward observances; he would reduce observances to a minimum and magnify general principles and subjective conditions.

The Law sought to secure obedience by severe penalties; he would win men by offering rewards. Persuasion would be better than force.

The Law rested on authority; but he would appeal to reason and conscience.

Christ perceived that the Law had all these features because it was provisional only, suited to the childish stage of development which must be held in check by innumerable Thou shalt nots; therefore he would invite all the world out of that childishness into a higher and permanent condition, into a manhood which could be trusted to be a law unto itself. In short, Christ called for character before conduct, perceiving that if

the former is right the latter may be left to take care of itself.

The Law was political and priestly, Christ determined that he would be social and non-ecclesiastical; that he would reform both politics and religion through society, and society through the individual; from the bottom up, and not from the top down, as most other reformers had tried to do.

The Law was limited in its scope and benefits to the Jewish nation only; he would not be national, but international, cosmopolitan, universal.

Last and greatest of all, the Law joined hands with all the religions of heathendom in striving by every possible means to propitiate an angry God. Primitive man always makes God in his own image, and then strives to reconcile God to himself, instead of himself to God. Christ was inspired to substitute for this monstrosity the loving invitation of a heavenly Father.

In this last conception he stands unapproachably alone. If he had contributed nothing else to the religious heritage of the race, that one thought would place him at the head of all seers and prophets. In order to place a just valuation upon Christ's originality and power of truth perception we must be care-

ful to remember that these ideas, so familiar to us as to seem axiomatic, were startling, revolutionary, and incredible to most men at that time. Wise men before him can claim credit for having glimpsed more or less clearly some of the principles which he saw and proclaimed so plainly, but in the white light of the full-orbed truth which Christ revealed the glory of all other religious teachers pales into insignificance.

And now at last the long years of growth and preparation have come to an end—it is time to act. The whole world is seething with passion and discontent. In high places corruption beyond description is the rule, while the lowly groan under intolerable cruelty and extortion. Even the consolations of religion are denied to men, for the Gentiles have no longer any real belief in their myriad gods, while Israel calls despairingly on a Jehovah who seems to have forsaken his peculiar people. Legionaries garrison every Hebrew city since Pompey's eagles desecrated even the Holy of Holies, men's hearts are sick within them, every ear is strained to catch tidings of a great Deliverer who is to bring justice to the wronged and freedom to the conquered. Suddenly they are startled by a wild cry from the wilderness of Judea—"Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!"

CHAPTER VI.

The Great Decision.

Sooner or later every man and woman comes to a parting of the ways. The little problems of daily life solved wrongly may be rectified; not so the crucial questions. They must be decided rightly once for all, mistake is fatal.

Some rush upon these crucial decisions thoughtlessly or recklessly, others stand appalled at the responsibility forced upon them for which they have made no preparation. Happy are they who, by the daily practice of wise decisions in little things, have qualified themselves for dealing with greater things.

As Christ came up from his baptism in the waters of the Jordan, he found himself face to face with the

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problem of his life. The time for inaction had passed, the Baptist's vehement declamation had roused the people, Christ must act promptly, wisely, decisively. Mistake made now could never be retrieved, by his decision now he must stand or fall; it was a crisis, not for himself only, but for the world.

To every man who has played a world part has come this supreme moment. Shall he turn to the right hand, or to the left, or shall he keep straight on? If he chooses aright, he goes on to victory; if wrong, his cause is wrecked, his life a failure, perhaps his head must pay the forfeit. The emotions of a great soul brought face to face with such a dilemma can be but faintly appreciated by us ordinary mortals. What debate must there be; what watchful and repeated scanning of all the conditions; what peering into the future; what dread of choosing the wrong path! And then, when the die has at last been cast, what will-power must it take to put all doubts and questionings behind and press forward boldly and unhesitatingly in the course determined! That is a test of manliness which proves a soul of heroic mold.

Like all great souls in great crises Christ now felt the need of solitude for thought and self-struggle.

Acclaimed by John as the long-expected Deliverer, gaped upon by the curious crowd, his one compelling impulse was to get away from it all and have time to think and pray. So into the solitude of the wilderness he took his way to make his fight alone, as every man must in his supreme moments.

The political and social conditions of Palestine and the world were so complicated at that time, that a minute knowledge of them is necessary for fully comprehending the problems which confronted Christ at the outset of his career. Here it must suffice to remind the reader briefly of a few of the more important points.

First, there was the Roman rule and the intense hatred which it excited in the whole Jewish people. Again and again had Israel made frantic struggles to wrench away from that iron hand, sometimes with temporary success, especially under the Maccabean leadership. But now the Roman eagle had fastened its talons more firmly than ever, the most sacred feelings of the Jews had been purposely and indecently outraged, the whole nation was looking and longing for a Deliverer. The demand had created a supply. From time to time fanatical leaders had sprung up

here and there, proclaiming themselves the Messiah, gaining a small following and a temporary notoriety; only to be summarily squelched in the end by the same heavy heel.

The only semblance of power and authority now remaining to the Jewish nation was incorporate in the Sanhedrim, a religious-judiciary council of seventy-one or seventy-two members, consisting in the main of priests and doctors of the law. Their status, between the people on the one hand and the Roman government on the other, was rather mixed; for the present purpose it is sufficient to say that to the orthodox Jew their authority was supreme, their wisdom unquestioned; to the Roman it was a matter of toleration under close restrictions.

The masses of the Jewish people, like most others at that time, were poor, ignorant, brutish and fanatical, sharing in the semi-savagery and materialism of their age. Only in their intense pride of race, in bigoted devotion to the forms of their national religion, and in consuming hatred of the Roman they stood solidly behind the Scribes and Pharisees. Neither class had any use for a Messiah who would not undertake to break the Roman yoke by physical force. But

Rome had a standing army of 340,000 men.

The rest of the world was compactly pagan.

Such, in brief, being the situation, what was the wisest course to be adopted by a Savior who was to take upon himself the stupendous task of saving the world? If it seems a difficult question to us, looking back from the vantage ground of 2,000 years of retrospect, how must it have seemed to one on the spot? If Christ had sought human guidance at this point, we know some of the advice which he would have received.

One man would have urged him to ally himself with the church party of the Temple. This Christ could easily do by going up to Jerusalem, where his talents and his knowledge of the Law would soon draw the favorable attention of the Scribes and Pharisees. Before long, in the natural course of events, he would become prominent in the Temple, and ultimately the head of the Sanhedrim. Then he would be in position to take advantage of the first signs of weakening in the Roman grasp, put himself at the head of a united people, throw off the hated yoke, as the Maccabees had done before him, and restore the worship of Jehovah to all its ancient grandeur and purity. It

was a very attractive program and what most people would call eminently "practical," in that it combined a maximum of dramatic deliverance for the nation with a maximum of glory and power for the Deliverer. Besides, every new increment of power could be turned into an instrumentality for accomplishing still more good—indeed, there was no limit to the beneficent vistas which opened up.

To be sure, there were some objectionable things about the Temple party. Although they were all pious to the point of suffocation, it was pretty well understood by people who kept their eyes and ears open that the Scribes and Pharisees did some things not intended for publication. Of course, they did not do them personally or directly; it was just as easy then as now to hire some one else to foreclose the mortgage on a widow's cottage and send constables to put her into the street, whenever she failed to meet usurious interest charges promptly.

There were even worse things whispered about them —but people always will talk, you know; especially about those who are rich and prominent. In all probability most of it was envious slander, or at least grossly exaggerated. Besides, how are you going to do any

good in the world, unless you take people as they are? The greatest of reformers must expect to use human instruments, and if he puts on airs of being so much better than any one else, he will succeed only in getting himself universally disliked. He must expect to conciliate, to be a little blind sometimes, to tolerate a little evil for the sake of accomplishing a great good.

But this adviser would be impatiently brushed aside by some religious enthusiast with counsel of an altogether different kind. "The Temple is hopelessly corrupt, honeycombed with worldliness and humbug. Nothing can be done with it; you must throw yourself upon the common people. Cater to their religious prejudices by preaching reform within the old party lines, with one eye on the Romans to avoid exciting their suspicions, and the other on the Scribes and Pharisees to avoid offending their sensibilities. Do nothing more radical than to found a church of your own and be its high priest. You have the ability, the people are ripe for that kind of reform, and it is less risky than going into politics."

Still another wise man would advise—"Be a Prophet. Renew the extinct but glorious line of the old Hebrew Seers and Judges, such as Joshua and Samuel, Elijah

and Elisha. With your abilities and knowledge you can easily gain a reputation for superior wisdom and sanctity, for the Hebrew mind takes kindly to the idea of the religious recluse. Establish yourself in some secluded but accessible spot, and before long great crowds will flock to you; they will reverence you as a great Prophet, and there is no telling how much good you may do simply by adopting this policy of masterly inactivity. It is neither convenient nor wise to waste time and strength in going after people who may just as well come to you, and think all the better of you for that very reason."

In short, it demanded careful thought and the soundest judgment to decide on the best general policy to pursue. Then there were many questions of detail for Christ to answer before starting out on his career.

What was the exact relation of himself to the Father, and how could it be presented best to the people?

Inasmuch as the Jewish nation would never accept any Messiah who abjured physical force and political deliverance, was it advisable to proclaim himself as the Messiah at once, or later, or not at all?

What was the most effective method for producing in a short time a religious impulse which should not die with his death, but should spread in ever-widening circles through the centuries?

Should he attempt to organize anything, or should be content himself with simply sowing seed of which others should reap the harvest?

Should he limit his mission to his own nation, or should he extend it to the Gentiles?

Should be begin by attacking the Hierarchy in its stronghold, or should he first find a firm foothold in Galilee, and select his Disciples there before moving on Jerusalem?

Should he try to avoid clashing with the Scribes and Pharisees, or should he accept their hostility as a foregone conclusion and say just what he thought of them?

It is an imputation on Christ's intelligence and acumen to suppose that in those days in the wilderness he did not debate such questions as these, besides many others which we cannot even surmise. Even now not all men are able to see the wisdom of the decisions which he made; what a supreme soul struggle it must have been to make those decisions then!

How searchingly must Christ have reviewed the situ-

ation, both local and universal, both present and future, in all its bearings! His piercing vision looked through all the intricacies of human life to the central truth which all others had missed or seen but dimly—that the salvation of the world was no question of Jerusalem against Rome, of Jehovah against Jupiter, of civilization against barbarism,of knowledge against ignorance, or even of justice against oppression; the great and only problem was the eradication of sin and selfishness from the human heart. Until that was accomplished all other reforms were nothing but a clipping of the twigs of the tree of evil, while its tap-root remained untouched. Exactly the same holds true today, and yet we have reformers still with us who cannot see what Christ saw so plainly twenty centuries ago. He perceived that it was a battle royal, for all ages and all places, of the spirit of Christ against the spirit of Cæsar; for the glory of Cæsar was to make all men serve him, the glory of Christ to serve all men.

But, granted these premises, the still harder question remained—How was it to be done? By force? But force was what ailed the whole world at that moment, and always had. By preaching? Sin and folly had been preached against by prophets and philosophers

for centuries. By a new political party, a new church, a new sect, a new cult? All these had had their day, and proved themselves but creatures of a day.

Christ decided on a plan for saving the world which was as novel as it was grandly wise and unselfish. He determined that he would try to draw all men unto him by a life of such poverty and self-sacrifice that no one could ever doubt its disinterestedness; of such spotless purity that the foulest tongue would never dare to slander it; by a revelation of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man such as had never before entered the human heart; all to be certified and sealed, if need be, by a death of the greatest possible agony and ignominy, to prove a greater and a higher love than earth had ever known before. In comparison with such ideals how gross seem the lives, or how paltry the doctrines, of other famous religious leaders—Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Mahomet! Even now we stand amazed at the boldness, originality, and far seeing wisdom of that conception!

But it is one thing to decide what should be done, and an entirely different thing to do it—as we weak mortals, the manliest of us, know too well. What man is there to-day, however brave and benevolent he may

be, who could deliberately decide on a course which he knew would alienate his family and friends; bring disgrace upon his mother, brothers and sisters; ruin his wordly prospects and waste his talents; make his name the target of every newspaper and cartoonist; his opinions and intentions misunderstood, misrepresented, and condemned by all men of influence and authority; finally land him in jail and bring him to the gallows—and all for what? To preach a distasteful doctrine to a people who would certainly reject the preaching and hang the preacher.

We must not forget that Christ had to face all the obloquy, both public and private, which could be heaped upon a traitor and a heretic by a fanatical people. Nor should it be forgotten that Christ was acutely sensible of the significance of his decision—no one more so. He was neither a rash fanatic nor a dull blunderer, but a clear-eyed, level-headed man of the world, in the best sense. He knew perfectly well what he was about, had weighed all the arguments, foreseen all the probable consequences. More than that, Christ was a gentleman. He shrank with all the sensitiveness of a high-spirited, refined nature from the very thought of insult and disgrace, from public con-

demnation and execration and a felon's death.

Then there was his mother! Since his father's death the care of her had devolved upon him, and he must seem to desert her and shirk his first duty. Too well he knew how he had already alarmed her orthodoxy by the signs which had not escaped a mother's watchful eye that her boy was drifting further and further away from the religion of his fathers and of all her friends. Of course, he could never make her understand, and so he must bear this cross also. Now the time was at hand when he must thrust a sword through her heart, when she should be horrified by hearing that her son had denounced the revered Rulers of her people as fools, vipers, and hypocrites!

Is it any wonder that it took Christ forty days and nights—if we accept the time literally—to come to a decision? That his soul was so racked by conflicting emotions that he thought of neither food nor sleep? That when at last the irrevocable decision was reached, exhausted nature gave way and tortured him still further with sensory illusions?

It is a physiological fact that intense mental suffering and acute nervous strain, acting upon a body weakened by deficient nutrition and by insomnia, will pro-

duce illusions of any or all of the senses. Instead of being supernatural, therefore, it would be altogether natural that Christ should suffer from illusions, visions, or troubled dreams; in any case they would be evidence of the exhausting struggle through which his soul had passed, for he was a powerful man.

In view of all the circumstances it seems incredible that any one could really believe that Christ's "temptation in the wilderness" consisted of three literal propositions by a literal Satan; and it would not be worth while to combat that idea, were it not that a large majority of those who have treated of this subject take that position. If the literalists will read the text more carefully, they will find that Matthew distinctly states that the three propositions were made to Christ by Satan *after* the forty days were ended. It was, therefore, when he was famished and exhausted by the real trial through which he had just passed that these visions passed before him, if they did at all. For it is not absolutely necessary to grant them the reality even of illusions. The story bears every appearance of being an allegorical description of a situation too complicated to be given in detail; as, indeed, we have just seen it to be. Allegory was the favorite and

usual style of description among Orientals then, as it is now; they never call a spade a spade if they can help it.

To take the allegory literally is to cast a slur upon Christ's intelligence. How could such childish propositions by an actual Satan be any "temptation" to Christ! The mere question ought to answer itself, leaving out of the account all geographical and physical impossibilities. It is only an instance of indiscreet zeal defeating its own object. In the effort to exalt Christ by throwing around him as much as possible of the miraculous, he is really reduced below the level of merely human discernment and wisdom.

Furthermore, it is impossible that any one should have written this marvelous story from personal knowledge, and there was no one who could have told the Disciples about it except Christ himself. This is the only instance of an attempt to give a detailed account of Christ's experiences when no human witnesses were near, and if he had told them such miraculous details they would have been careful to state their authority.

But whether we prefer to regard it as allegory or illusion, it is easy to trace a strong parallelism be-

tween the alleged propositions of Satan and the real problems which have been suggested in the preceding pages; for those curious to seek out parallels it is an interesting study. If there were actual sensory illusions, they were the natural nervous reflex of the tumult of thought and feeling which had held possession of Christ for more than a month, the last clouds of a storm which had passed by.

But no illusions can bring *delusions* into that steadfast soul. Clear and strong in spite of physical exhaustion stands his determination, even as it shall stand against all future assaults to the bitter end. For that forty days' fight was by no means the last of the struggle, as we shall see later. Christ did not secure immunity from self-struggle and soul-stress by one great victory any more than we can.

And when the battle of the wilderness was won, when the great Decision was at last reached, the angel of a great Peace ministered to his bruised and weary spirit.

CHAPTER VII.

A Strange Ministry.

At this distance of time and space it is almost impossible for us to realize the startling novelty of the life and doctrine to which Christ decided to devote himself, nor the manly qualities which such a course demanded. For example, to us the ideas of altruism —however poorly we may live up to them—are commonplace; the supreme value of every soul, the civil and religious rights of every individual however humble, and the villainy of oppression, bloodshed, and immorality, are simply axiomatic. But to the world of Christ's time such ideas were unknown, or known only to be derided. Might was the only right, and the only crime was poverty or weakness. The poor were

allowed to live, as necessary evils, to supply material for oppression; but they had no rights which stood in the way if their masters chose to sacrifice them to their own amusement or ambition. The worst governed portions of the modern world, in Turkey or China, hardly furnish a parallel.

What religion there was served largely as an effective instrument of extortion. It was kept carefully in the hands of a favored few, and made as complicated and mysterious as possible, in order that the common man might be persuaded that his only hope for the future life lay in the (well paid) intercession of these intermediaries. To this blind, besotted, bloody, bigoted, bestial age came Christ, proclaiming every truth most hateful to the masters of the social order, most incomprehensible to their dupes. For he preached love instead of hate, honor for corruption, purity for sensuality, kindness for cruelty, and the right of every soul to come straight to God with no barrier of priest or ritual. What courage and manliness that meant, the highest courage both physical and moral! Hedged in as we are on all sides, each by his own little world, supported in our opinions by friends, fellow-citizens, and the spirit of our age, we fail to realize how much

of our boasted independence of thought and action really rests upon these props.

Try for a moment to imagine what it would mean to set yourself directly across the public opinion of your time, to question the wisdom of the wisest, to defy the power of the strongest, to shock the feelings of the dearest, to stand alone against the world! Even then the parallel is not complete, for there would be no physical danger so long as you kept within the law. But Christ took his life in his hand when he decided to proclaim to the world his novel doctrine, for he was bound to stir up a perfect hornet's nest of the most vindictive passions of the human heart. It mattered not that he proclaimed a spiritual kingdom, that he insisted and reiterated that it was not of this world; the ecclesiastical Powers soon perceived that the success of his ministry could mean nothing less than a complete subversion of the religious, moral, and social order then existing.

Odd as it sounds, the fact is that Christ was a heretic, and the worst kind of a heretic, to all about him. The Pharisees stood for the orthodoxy of the Jewish people, and it was an orthodoxy as cruel as it was narrow and uncompromising. The "Peculiar Peo-

ple" had always been painfully pious; no wonder that they scorned and hated this rank heretic who came denouncing the cherished prejudices which they called their convictions. The whole nation looked up to the Pharisees not only as their religious teachers, but as representatives and leaders of all their fiery patriotism and national hopes. He was a bold man who ventured to play heretic to their orthodoxy.

But did not Christ receive the physical and moral support of the poor and humble? Are we not told that the common people heard him gladly? Yes and no. It is true that during a part of his ministry they followed him in great crowds, that they pressed so upon him and his Disciples that he had opportunity neither to eat nor sleep, and he was obliged to retreat into the wilderness to escape them; they were even bent on making him King; he dared not enter Capernaum openly lest he be mobbed by his admirers. But what did it all amount to, as the sequel proved? Christ was too acute not to perceive how little real depth there was to the movement, and he did not hesitate to say so. He understood perfectly the excitable, marvel-loving nature of the Jewish people; he knew that the one thought and desire of the whole na-

tion was for a Messiah who would drive out the Romans with the sword; that his figures of speech were taken literally and not spiritually, and that all their ideas and longings were earthly and material. He foresaw the inevitable result when they should discover that he was not in sympathy with their political ambitions, that he believed in rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, that his whole mission was spiritual and not political.

To be sure, the oppressed, the poor and the sick at first hailed with ecstacy Christ's bewilderingly beautiful promises of hope and relief, but only so far as they took them literally. What he really meant was on a plane as far above their comprehension as their desires. The one thing which tried his spirit more than all others was the misapprehension of his teaching by almost all his hearers. Even the Twelve showed repeatedly that they had failed to grasp the true inwardness of his message. And in truth it was a hard doctrine, the hardest in its simplicity which the world has ever heard.

But if Christ's doctrine was too sublimated for the common people, why did it not appeal to the cultured and refined? In these days—largely because of his

life and death—there is a saving minority, an aristocracy of heart and brain, a true culture to which no lofty thought or pure ideal appeals in vain. But the rare and infrequent culture of Christ's time was selfish and gross. It made no secret of its contempt for the common people, and democracy in religion was as abhorrent to it as democracy in government or society. The idea of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, so familiar to us,—and more or less welcome—was to that age as preposterous as it was displeasing.

But the contempt which each class heaped upon that below it was cheerfully passed on by the whole nation to strangers, just as may be seen in India and China to-day. The book of Sifri said that "'a single Israelite was of more value in the sight of God than all the nations of the world." The Gentile despised the Jew, and the Jew returned the compliment with usury—a mutual regard not unknown even in this century of sweetness and light. Greeks called all other people "barbarians," and the Latin word for stranger was "an enemy." Celsus within two centuries after Christ declared that "the man must be devoid of sense who believed it possible for Greeks and barbarians to agree on one religious code." Even the Stoics, the flower

of pagan thought and conscience, had never in their wildest dreams of altruism conceived of such equality as Christ demanded.

To such an age, which regarded the State as everything and the individual as nothing, Christ proclaimed the value and sacredness of every soul and the brotherhood of all. He stood for spiritual values against material, for the refined and ideal against the gross, for lofty enthusiasms instead of swinish stolidity. Christ was progressive, strenuous, all alive, hopelessly in advance of his age. Even now there are only a few of us who have caught up with his ideas. In the latter part of his ministry he knew that he led a forlorn hope to inevitable defeat; that he would end by pleasing no one and antagonizing every one; that he must suffer ignominious failure in the present and look to future generations for comprehension. Nevertheless he went forward to the bitter end without flinching. Was that manly?

Christ was no shirker in his ministry. He asked no one to follow where he himself was afraid to go first. He was resolved that no one in all time to come should ever have cause to falter because of his lack of leadership. That was fair and manly—to test his new

religion first of all upon himself and so prove what it was worth. Neither did he want shirkers. Repeatedly and distinctly he warned his followers what they had to expect in privations, insults, tortures and death. No one should be able to say that his adherence had been won by false pretenses.

We, enjoying all the advantages of this twentieth century since Christ, beholding the results of the plan which he adopted, are able to perceive its wisdom; but that was not at all evident in the year 27 A. D. In fact, to all his contemporaries its feasibility was dubious at best, to most it was stark lunacy. His relatives, assuming the prerogative of meddling always so dear to kinsfolk, were for putting him under restraint as *non compos mentis.* Even some of the Twelve, especially Peter, presumed upon their intimacy to remonstrate with him and to offer advice. In short, Christ suffered all the petty personal annoyances which fall to the lot of every one who persists in an unpopular course of action.

But all this was as the dashing of waves against a cliff. Christ adhered to his purpose and his ministry, and those who presumed upon his patience were astonished at the dignity and force with which he re-

pelled improper interference. He knew perfectly when and how to assert himself.

Yet never was there a nature more quick and sensitive, more hungry for comprehension and sympathy, and there is ample evidence how sorely Christ's patience was tried by the crass stupidity, or willful perversity, of those whom he was trying to enlighten and inspire. His keen, alert mind strove painfully to penetrate the density of those about him. Even the Twelve were so stupid that, when he warned them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, they thought that he was remarking on the fact that they were out of bread! And there they stuck, until he was obliged to explain to them his simple and obvious figure of speech.

There was nothing slow or monotonous about Christ; his moods were many and his versatility without limit. Not that he was "moody," but he had all the many-sidedness which was possible within the limits of the normal. Of course Christ's mood was usually serious, often sad, sometimes despairing. But most of the time he so overflowed with energy, physical and spiritual, that he enjoyed his ministry intensely, especially in the early days, lavishing his strength upon

immense audiences and tedious foot journeys. Then came times of reaction when, discouraged and sick at heart, he felt impelled to get away from everyone, even the well meaning but slow-witted Disciples, and to go off by himself for prayer, meditation, and renewal of spirit. At such times the mountain top or the desert was his chosen refuge.

His mood and manner could change in a flash. Most of the time his hearers had the grace to listen respectfully when he was in a didactic mood, although they could only partially comprehend his wisdom. But sometimes his unaffected simplicity bred the contempt which familiarity always breeds in vulgar natures, so that they were emboldened to take liberties of speech. Then he turned upon them with stinging rebuke.

Even his silent mood—and he was often silent—was impressive.

In his preaching Christ combined great dignity with effectiveness; no ranting or windmill oratory. We see this reflected in the looks and comments of his audiences—they are astonished at his doctrine; no one ever spake like this man; he speaks with authority, different from the Scribes; no man dares ask him any further

question; his adversaries are ashamed; they are persuaded that he is Elijah or some other Prophet come to life again.

His method of teaching was usually simplicity itself; plain-spoken, earnest, suited to his audiences; no subtleties of doctrine or definition, no complicated system. Other religious teachers have been fond of laying down detailed rules of conduct, with minute formulæ for all possible occasions; Christ preferred to lay down general principles and leave the application to each individual for himself—an admirable simplicity to which we are at last gradually returning after centuries of ecclesiastical meddling.

It was the delight of the Scribes and Pharisees to hedge themselves round about with great exclusiveness and ceremonial affectations, to try to magnify their wisdom by dark sayings and their piety by ritualistic frills without end; Christ was superior to all that, he needed no silly aids to his dignity or his doctrine. No wonder that he amazed people who had had little opportunity to observe a real scholar and a gentleman.

Christ respected himself and his mission. When certain of the Scribes and Pharisees demanded some

miraculous sign of his authority, he rebuked their impertinence severely. He told them, in effect, that it was not his mission to gratify their curiosity, but it was their business to recognize and accept the truth of his teachings.

In Christ's preaching and teaching speaks out the same straightforward manliness which characterized everything else he did. He hit straight out from the shoulder, and never hesitated to say what he thought for fear of offending some one who had influence, or from danger to himself. He never dodged or hedged or refused to show his colors; but sometimes he did not choose to submit to unlimited quizzing. Then he came back at his questioner with searching counter-questions, crowding him so hard with his rapid-fire that he was glad to draw out of range.

To us Occidentals his use of figures of speech may seem excessive, but it is to be remembered that he was speaking to Oriental audiences. The Oriental mind loves circumlocution and abhors directness as the Occidental does not. The use of stories and parables, however, has always been the most effective method of teaching "the general," and of this art Christ was a master. As dangers thickened and the Pharisees hov-

ered more and more wolfishly about him, he used this indirect method more frequently as affording them less opportunity for finding an accusation against him to the Romans.

In comparison with Christ's style the rabbis' style of discourse and exposition was unedifying to the last degree. They delighted in mystical sayings and far-fetched interpretations, their notions were as fantastic as those of insanity itself. Having no guiding principles and no sense of direction they wandered vaguely about, lost in the woods of their own verbosity. Their tribe is not extinct even in our day. It would seem as if Christ made a point of presenting in his own teaching as great a contrast as possible to their turgid vacuity. His literary style, even in the second and third hand form in which it has come down to us, is the perfection of simplicity and the simplicity of perfection.

No scholar, whether religious or secular, can afford to be ignorant of Christ's sayings simply as a matter of literary culture, as an exercise in the most forceful forms of self-expression. His diction was perfect. Were it not that so many of his pithy sayings were struck off in the heat of debate, we could hardly be-

lieve them to be extemporaneous; they flash with the perfect polish of gems prepared at leisure in the study. But his maxims and aphorisms were away over the heads of most of his hearers, and even now they fall on many ears too dull of hearing. Like all epigrammatic sayings, they must not be taken too literally, but with due allowance for circumstances and hyperbole, and especially with sympathetic insight. To the hard-shell literalist they are foolishness, and sometimes they seem flatly contradictory.

The Disciples themselves, who enjoyed such exceptional opportunities for a liberal education in Christ's thought and diction, were often sadly at a loss. Repeatedly were they compelled, after vainly debating among themselves the meaning of one of his close packed sentences, to come to him in private and ask the interpretation.

Compared with Christ's words the reported sayings of most of the sages of the world, whether considered from an ethic or esthetic point of view, are crude, redundant, and often childish. Even when he voices the same thought as theirs, the form in which he casts it is always superior. For instance Confucius, the Chinese ethical culturist five hundred years before Christ, had

also laid down a Golden Rule, but in this inferior negative form as given in his Analects, book XV., chap. 23.—"What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." Compare also Christ's "Judge not that ye be not judged"—as terse and forceful as language can be made—with this feeble circumlocution by Hillel, the famous Rabbi, president of the Sanhedrim from 30 to 10 B. C., "Judge not thy neighbor until thou findest thyself in his position!"

The best way to appreciate the superiority of Christ's thought and diction, and the tremendous uplift which his ministry gave to Occidental literature, secular as well as religious, is to compare his words directly with the great religious books which cover similar ground and stand in a similar position historically. They are the Analects of Confucius, the Canon of Buddha, and the Koran of Mahomet; the first two coming nearly as many centuries before Christ as the latter came after. Each of these world-famous books, or collects, also written largely by disciples, is still revered by millions; and together they contain the religious or ethical principles of about three-fourths of the human race. It is not easy to find parallel passages, but here are enough for illustration.

The Dhammapada of Buddha: "A path of many re births have I vainly traveled, seeking the builder of this house; full of suffering is the birth over and over again. Now that I have seen thee, oh builder of the house, thou shalt not build it again. The rafters all are broken, the battlements of the house demolished; the soul, having escaped changeability, has attained the end of desire."

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The Udanavarga of Buddha: "The pure man knows not death, he who is impure dwells with death; he who is pure will not die, he who is impure dies repeatedly."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

The Gospel of Buddha: "Those who imagine truth in untruth, and see untruth in truth, never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires. They who know truth in truth, and untruth in untruth, arrive at the truth and follow true desires."

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Analects of Confucius, book XVII., chapter 6: "To be able to practice five things everywhere under heaven constitutes perfect virtue—gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. If you are grave, you will not be treated with disrespect. If you are generous, you will win all. If you are earnest, you will accomplish much. If you are kind, this will enable you to employ the services of others."

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Analects of Confucius, book IV., chapter 9: "The scholar whose mind is set on truth, and who is ashamed of bad clothes and bad food, is not fit to be conversed with."

"Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

Analects of Confucius, Book III., chapter 13: "He who offends against Heaven has none to whom he can pray."

"Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out."

Koran of Mahomet, chapter III.; beginning of prayer: "O Lord, thou hast not created this in vain;

far be it from thee; therefore deliver us from the torment of hell fire; surely whom thou shalt throw into fire thou wilt also cover with shame;" and so on for several pages.

"Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Koran, chapter L.; The Resurrection: "And Paradise shall be brought near unto the pious; and it shall be said unto them, This is what ye have been promised;" and so forth for several pages.

"He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Koran, Chapter II.: "Do you, therefore, whenever an apostle cometh unto you with that which your souls desire not, proudly reject him, and accuse some of imposture, and slay others?"

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Few take the trouble to make a direct comparison

such as this of the words of Christ with those of the other famous religious teachers and leaders of the world. This is unfortunate. The consequence is that people have a vague idea that the Bible is simply one of several great sacred books, while they have not the slightest conception of its immeasurable superiority to all the others in every respect. After turning the hundreds of dreary pages which make up the Analects, the Buddhist Canon, and the Koran—the first two containing no God and no hope; all of them abounding in puerility and commonplace, and generally deficient in literary merit—to turn to the crisp, luminous, generally sublime words of Christ, breathing the love of a Heavenly Father and the hope of Immortality for all mankind, is to step from a dim, dank cavern into the open light of day!

In these days we hear much about Menticulture. Books and magazines are published explaining how every one may make the most of his powers and capacities, pointing out the sources of weakness in character, stimulating us to strengthen the whole man at every point. The Jews heard Christ with amazement, saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" They never suspected how he had been

diligently utilizing the eighteen silent years in storing his memory with all the wisdom of his age, in training his tongue to perfect submission to his thought, and his thought to submission to his will. In all those years Christ was acquiring that wonderful sufficiency for every occasion, that perfect poise, that tremendous psychic power. In public he seemed not to know the meaning of fear, nor was he ever "rattled;" this was not due to stolidity, but to the wonderful grip he had on himself. For we know that he did fear, that he approached the cross with all the shrinking and horror which disaster combined with a disgraceful and painful death might well inspire in a sensitive, lofty soul. In this above all he was supremely manlike and manly. Many might claim to step exactly in his footsteps up to the forty days, but from that point on he leaves hopelessly behind all but the greatest saints and martyrs. He was the model and perfect prototype of Luther, defying an all-powerful hierarchy; of Washington, upholding a desperate cause against foes without and traitors within; of Lincoln, teaching himself by the log fire's light and dying a martyr for the rights of the enslaved.

We are prone to assume that, up to the time of the

final tragedy, Christ enjoyed a ministry of easy triumph, having no serious obstacles to contend with save the unbelief and hatred of the ruling classes. But there is no lack of evidence that his whole ministry was a strenuous struggle, and quite as much with doubts within as with doubters without.

In his forty days' struggle Christ achieved a supreme victory over self, decided on his future course, foretasted the agony of Calvary and accepted it, and put away fearthought while retaining full forethought—a perfection of menticulture which puts us weaklings to the blush. He who fears is a slave, and every one of us fears something. Christ finally freed himself from that slavery, and showed us how we are to strive for a like freedom.

But it would be rash to assume that Christ conquered self once for all in his battles of the wilderness, and henceforth had only to go on serenely in his moral might. It is significant that Luke states that, after the so-called "temptations," the Devil "departed from him for a season," plainly implying that this was not the last of it. Unquestionably there were many subsequent self-struggles. At the Last Supper Christ tells his Disciples that "ye are they which have continued

with me in my temptations." When we recall the many tangled problems which he had to untangle for himself in that month and a third, it is evident that, as time passed by, numerous circumstances must have arisen to try his resolution anew.

As has already been remarked, Christ had undertaken a ministry which to all human prescience was the height of foolhardiness. As time elapsed he himself realized that, as a matter of fact, he was making no serious headway in spite of the crowds and acclamations which greeted him. It is true that vast numbers followed him about as soon as he became famous; but it was a gaping, selfish, fickle crowd in the main, out for the loaves and fishes, having no real comprehension of him, and just as ready to forsake him when the tide turned. It was a situation to stagger the strongest resolution.

Think what a temptation was laid upon Christ to temporize, to make some concession to the pedantry of the Pharisees and the ignorance of the common people. The former are the men in whose hands his life may some time lie; why not be diplomatic, why not smooth over differences instead of stirring up ill-feeling?

On the other hand, why not bring his doctrine down to the level of the ignorant and bigoted peasantry, cater a little to their fanaticism, promise them what they want and so secure their allegiance? Instead of that Christ adhered to his almost chimerical project—to present an absolutely new and distasteful doctrine, of the highest ideality, to gross and fanatical minds in such a way that it might be understood and accepted. That demanded a rare and persuasive genius, and Christ undertook the task without training in any school of philosophy or elocution.

Although his chief appeal was to the poor and ignorant, Christ never stooped to the arts of the demagogue, he never lowered his ideals to the level of their foolish or perverted notions. On the contrary, he addressed to that rude peasantry a diction which for elevation of thought and feeling, elegance, force, and epigramatic finish, has been the envy and despair of all subsequent speakers. No one has been able to improve on Christ's apothegms any more than on his doctrines, and the best orators have always been glad to avail themselves of quotations from his utterances.

No wonder that the record of his ministry is punctuated with exclamations of disappointment, of weari-

ness over the obtuseness and grossness of his countrymen. It is significant and suggestive that, when Peter undertook to dissuade him from persisting in his plan even to the point of death, Christ turned upon him with the same fierce rebuke with which he is represented to have rejected the offer of worldly power and glory two or three years before. "Get thee behind me, Satan," was not so much a rebuke of Peter's well meant but ill advised remonstrance, as the expression of a determination to beat down and banish with all the energy of his soul the doubts and discouragements which had followed him relentlessly throughout his ministry. How much closer it brings the hero to us when we realize the manliness with which he held to his resolution in spite of everything and everybody. Surely no man who admires grit and pluck can refuse his tribute.

Christ's self-reliance was as wonderful as his persistence. He kept straight on as he had begun, predicting that his words should stand forever; that eventually, long after his death, they should be carried throughout the world; that Eternity alone should behold their full fruition. Some men have thought in continents, a few in hemispheres—Christ thought in worlds and ages.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Successful Failure.

As we approach the final tragedy of this tragic life, the manliness of Jesus Christ assumes heroic proportions. Not merely because he submitted to an agonizing death with fortitude; grand as that is, many men, both good and bad, even women and children, have done as much. In Christ's death we stand in the presence of a heroism which surpasses all other courage in that degree that it transcends all other experience.

Exactly how Christ's dual nature, as Son of God and Son of Man, was constituted we cannot determine, but we can perceive that from it flowed his supreme and

unparalleled suffering. This supreme suffering did not depend upon the physiological principle that the finer the nervous organization the keener is the agony. Of course there is as much difference betwen individuals as between races in susceptibility to suffering, both physical and mental. The stolidity of the Chinaman defies the utmost ingenuity of his torturers, and the fanatical exaltation of the Hindu devotee raises him above the sensation of pain. But Christ was neither stolid nor fanatical. Both by race and culture he belonged to a highly sensitive type, and he drew near to death with a deliberation which ensured a maximum of suffering both anticipatory and actual. Even when about to be nailed to the cross he refused the alleviation of the narcotic drink, offered him according to custom to benumb the nerves and diminish the agony of the crucified. Yet all this fails to explain Gethsemane and Calvary.

Nor was Christ's supreme suffering the result of the indignities to which he was subjected. That was a rare chance for the Jewish rabble—to be able to strike, insult, and spit upon defenseless nobility and purity. The instinct of the *canaille* to recognize superiority is unerring, and its hate is the more devilish

as it feels instinctively its own inferiority; so it cringes until the time comes when it can safely rend and tear. Every person of refinement has had some sad experience of the delight with which vulgarity, in small things or great, seizes upon any opportunity to avenge itself upon those who have committed the unforgivable offense of being superior to it. As Christ said to his brethren, "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." He was in the world, but not of it; a fact which the world was quick to recognize, for the world knows its own. But the men and women who can do without the world are just those whom the world cannot do without.

Here was the loftiest possible embodiment of humanity; a life of exalted thought, word, and deed which had been a perpetual rebuke to all that was gross and petty; the hands which had served only to bless and relieve were bound and helpless—what a chance to let loose the hellish malice of all meanness! Little they knew or cared about the questions at issue between Christ and the Pharisees; they simply saw the chance to glut their hate of goodness and wisdom, and they made the most of it. When we remem-

ber that Christ had all the instincts of a gentleman, and when we recall the spirit with which he had always faced down his assailants, we are able to realize, faintly, the manly self-control which enabled him to receive all those filthy insults with his habitual majestic calmness.

But all this is not sufficient explanation. Of course it was no ordinary dread of either pain or humiliation which caused that agonized shrinking in the Garden of Gethsemane; the desperate prayer that, if possible, this cup might pass. That is the usual explanation, but it is totallly insufficient. It is inconceivable that Christ was not equal to a test which so many of mankind have met firmly; his whole ministry forbids it. There was some strange soul agony involved in his death, compared with which mere bodily pain was a trifling matter, and we can be very sure of its reality by observing its effects, both physical and moral.

That the shadow of an impending Horror of some kind had loomed darker and larger above his path as the passing days brought him nearer and nearer to Golgotha, and that the dread anticipation lay heavy upon his spirit long beforehand, is shown by his own words. Much effort has been expended on the explan-

ation of the exact nature of that Horror, mostly tending toward the supernatural and mystical; but it detracts from that "last full measure of devotion" to obtrude the supernatural unnecessarily. To him certainly it was intensely real to force such a steadfast soul as his to beg for mitigation; that strange Something so appalled him that he faintly hoped, even to the last, that it might be evaded. The shrinking in Gethsemane was natural, not supernatural; which is just the reason why Christ's heroism is worthy to stand at the head of all martyrdoms.

Perhaps we can obtain some light on this dark subject by questioning another actor in the tragedy of the Garden—Judas Iscariot. It is foreign to the purpose of this writing to enter into any detailed discussion of the character and intentions of the traitor, but it is necessary for a correct understanding of Christ's position at this point to note the following facts.

First, the commonly accepted idea that Judas betrayed his Master simply and solely for the sake of obtaining the paltry value of thirty pieces of silver for himself, involves serious difficulties. Taking the lowest view of his character—that "he was a thief,

and had the bag, and bore what was kept therein"—betrayal would be the height of folly even from an avaricious point of view, for he would thereby cut himself off from all the advantages and dishonest opportunities of treasurer of the company of the Disciples. Self-interest would keep him loyal in appearance at least, so long as he enjoyed the handling of the common fund.

Again, it is to be noted that there was great dissatisfaction with Christ's refusal to take to himself some temporal power. Even the most devoted of his followers found their faith sorely tried by his persistence in remaining passive at the very time when it seemed to them that he should deliver his master-stroke. Of course Judas shared this opinion, and strongly. Doubtless golden visions floated before his eyes of a great kingdom to be established, with Christ as King and himself as First Lord of the Treasury. He made up his mind that Christ was making a great mistake, that he failed to grasp the situation and the opportunity, that the only way was to compel him to assert himself. Judas was by no means the first of the Disciples to take upon himself the responsibility of showing Christ his "mistakes."

The behavior of Judas at the Last Supper was not that of a detected villain. A malicious traitor, when he finds that his treachery is discovered, does one of three things; he confesses and begs for mercy, or he braves it out and asserts his innocence, or he slinks away too frightened to complete his treachery. Judas does none of these things. In silence he accepts the sop which proclaims him to all as the betrayer, and goes out to complete his undertaking just as if he had understood Christ's "That thou doest, do quickly" to be an implied approval of his plan.

There are several other facts which indirectly, but strongly, confirm this view. Why should Judas adopt a device so clumsy and offensive as a kiss for the purpose of indicating Christ to the arresting party? Almost any other way would have been equally effective, much simpler and easier; in fact, kissing would be the last method which a black-hearted traitor would think of using. Besides, in case Christ and the Disciples, already forewarned of his intention, should resist, kissing would be impossible. All these difficulties are avoided by supposing that Judas was presumptuous rather than base, that he adopted the sign of the kiss as equivalent to saying, "I have brought

the enemy upon you, not as a traitor, but as a friend; that you may be compelled, like Samson, to put forth your power."

On any other supposition Christ's reception of the kiss of betrayal is incomprehensible. For a far smaller offense he had previously turned upon Peter with the scathing rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Yet this basest of insults and injuries—according to the accepted view—he receives quietly with "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" or, according to another account, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" It certainly looks as if Christ had reasons for taking a much more lenient view of Judas' action than his followers have taken.

Further confirmation is found in Judas' terrible remorse the moment he discovered that he had overshot the mark, that his presumptuous interference had brought down disaster upon all concerned, himself included. His remorse and expiation were too immediate, violent and complete to be explained solely by instant repentance of an evil deed.

In short, there is strong presumptive evidence that it was Judas' intention—acting no doubt from mixed motives, as men always do— to force the situation,

What he succeeded in doing was to precipitate the crisis of Christ's career. Without such interference that crisis might have been postponed indefinitely, Christ might have gone on preaching a long time before his enemies mustered up courage to use physical violence against him. The fight between himself and the Pharisees had been fierce and even bitter, but so far it had been a war of words only, for they feared the people. That this situation should continue would seem to have been greatly to the advantage of Christ's mission, that his opportunity to teach the people and confirm his Disciples might be extended as far as possible.

At any rate the situation was now completely changed. Not that Christ was either entrapped or endangered. *It is to be carefully remembered that there was no necessity whatever for him to play into the plot of Judas if he did not choose so to do.* The injury which Judas inflicted upon his Master was not —as popularly supposed—that he delivered him to his enemies; that was out of his power. It was that he forced him to come to a premature decision. For three courses of action were still open to Christ, and he was perfectly free to select. Of these the simplest

course was merely to evade the issue, by going anywhere that night except to the Mount of Olives.

The second course open was to follow his natural inclination, to face the enemy boldly as he always had, but this time with force; electrify the people and restore his prestige; ride into power on a wave of popular enthusiasm; finish his ministry with triumph for his cause and confusion for his foes. That certainly was an attractive program and quite feasible; it was the course which any one else would have adopted.

That such thoughts were passing through Christ's mind there is a hint in his advice to the Disciples at the Last Supper to buy swords. Another hint occurs in his rebuke to Simon Peter, when the latter attempted, by a well meant but ill aimed blow, to bisect the head of one of the attacking party with a sword. "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels" strongly suggests that the idea of meeting force with force had just been present in the mind of Christ.

There was one other alternative—to turn his back on all this, to yield himself without a blow to disaster, disgrace, despair, darkness and death. It was the old

"temptation" of the wilderness revived, yet how different. The dread alternative which, three years before, was remote and hypothetical, now stares him in the face in full grisly horror. The probability of it had been dogging his footsteps all the time; more and more certainly had he come to realize that some day it must become an actuality, yet without Judas' interference it need not have come so soon. Now he is compelled to decide. No wonder that he is in an agony of mental conflict! The great Decision, extended over forty days, was a slight matter compared with this concentrated anguish.

And here springs into highest relief the importance of insisting on that virility of Christ's character which has been emphasized throughout these pages. It is the key to the riddle which has puzzled the centuries. With that left out it is impossible to understand Gethsemane and Calvary; a difficulty which many have felt and have sought to remove by various expedients, but without success. Christ was no weakling, who had been meekly and mildly preaching righteousness, and then tamely gave up at the first exhibition of force. As has been explained above, *and should never be forgotten,* he was a powerful, aggressive character; full

of fight for what was right and tremendously in earnest; who had spent thirty years in preparation, and three years in sacrificing everything to a mission in which his whole soul was centered.

At first that mission had given promise of great success. But later came reaction, many converts deserted him, the Hierarchy became more hostile, more than once he was obliged to retreat into obscure places to save his life. From one of those retreats he emerged to make his final entry into Jerusalem, which developed into a great popular demonstration and triumph. Multitudes had come up to the Feast of the Passover, as usual; it has been estimated that on such occasions the city held within its narrow limits as many as two millions of people. The city was in a ferment, part arguing for him, and part against him. Even many members of the Sanhedrim were secretly in his favor, but dared not come out on his side while the issue was so uncertain. The success of his mission seemed to be swaying in the balance. It needed only a word from Christ to start a formidable movement.

Every day he appeared in the Temple, followed by vast crowds. He defied the Hierarchy on their own

ground by driving out the money-brokers and merchants from the sacred enclosure (a source of much pious Pharisaic profit) and by exposing and denouncing their hypocrisy in the most public manner and the severest terms. From a worldly point of view his career was at its zenith.

Meanwhile the Sadducees, Scribes and Pharisees were at their wits' end. Something must be done, yet there was nothing which they dared do. Then came Judas' offer, and they snatched at it. Now they thought they saw a way to crush Christ and his mission at one blow.

Now, if ever, was the time for Christ to resort to other means than moral suasion. Even now it was not too late to snatch victory from defeat by one bold stroke, by doing that which his friends had all along been urging him to do, which his enemies feared that he might do. For years he had fought a good fight, accepting every challenge, repelling every attack, routing and pursuing his opponents—now should he give up? Every drop of fighting blood in his body cried No!

And yet he did give up! Why? For two reasons mainly. Christ was resolved to finish consistently the

mission on which he had decided in the wilderness and which he had preached to thousands—the mission of proclaiming and inaugurating a purely spiritual kingdom, free from all worldly entanglements whatsoever. His kingdom must prevail solely through the power of its truth over the souls of men, otherwise let it fail. To employ force in any form were self-stultification.

Note, in passing, that this supreme test of Christ's manly devotion to his principles, although more like a temptation to do wrong than that of the wilderness, was really no temptation to do anything which was wrong *per se.* This was as near as a perfectly sinless being could come to experiencing temptation to do evil. Yet that does not exclude him from full sympathy with us, for it is true of the great majority of our temptations also that they are not allurements to anything intrinsically evil, but only to something which is made wrong by the conditions of the case. He knows well, only too well, what it is to be tempted to do what is right and proper in itself, only that it involves some surrender of principle, the giving up of some ideal, the being false to one's highest self. *Rather than do that Christ embraced the Cross.*

The other great reason was that his mission must

remain forever unfinished except it ended in disaster to himself. Worldly triumph meant spiritual failure, because a large part of his mission was to sound all the heights and depths of human experience. Thus far he had given to the world a perfect example of strength and courage fighting strenuously for the truth, a model of militant manliness for all ages to come. But the other model remained untouched. Life is full of disappointment, failure, and despair; indeed, they make up the greater part of the world's experience. What could Christ know about failure and despair if he chose the course of routing his enemies by force? What consolation and inspiration could the story of his life bring to souls bowed down? There will be no tears in the eyes which read that story unless there were tears in the heart which lived that life. *A triumphant Christ were an imperfect Christ.*

And so he chose the course which no one else would have chosen, he trod the path which no one else has ever trod. For what hero in all the history of the world, holding in his hand the triumph of the cause more dear to him than life itself, has put it aside of his own accord, and for such a reason? And so Christ elected to show how a strong man should die; how an

ambitious man should deny his dearest ambition; how a man instinct with all the energies and talents for success should patiently accept failure—for the sake of principle. *That was his Agony.*

The scene in the Garden presents another strange incident, of minor importance, but pointing in the same direction—the great loneliness from which Christ suffered. This was something new. In all his previous self-conflicts his chief concern had been to seek complete isolation on the mountain or in the desert; now for the first time he yearns for human sympathy and nearness in his distress. Was not this because he felt less need of sympathy while his heart was in the fight, but now that he had given up the struggle, and these few souls were the only tangible result of all his efforts and his sacrifices, he longed to have them near him in the short time remaining? If so, it is a very human touch. Perhaps, too, he looked wistfully for some sign in them that they felt his disappointment and his heart-break. If so, he looked in vain. Even that poor consolation was denied him. Appreciating his distress as feebly as they had understood his doctrine—they went to sleep!

And now that he had given up the fight, it would

seem as if the doubts which had all along assailed him in ever increasing swarms, began at last to prevail against even his faith and optimism. After all might it be that the critics were right and he wrong; that no world-salvation could be accomplished by all his self-sacrifice; that he was a self-deluded leader of the deluded? How could world-wide results be expected to flow from so small a source as three scant years of preaching? To such an intense nature as his such a prospect, not because it involved disaster for himself, but because on him hung the last hope of lifting mankind out of the sin in which the whole world wallowed—such failure were far more terrible than mere physical death. All who came before him had failed—Prophets, Martyrs, Priests and Kings—now was he also to fail? Then farewell hope for the human race forever!

At last the hero puts this temptation also under foot. Gethsemane returns its final answer to the Wilderness—one and the same as at the first—for the battle of the wilderness has lasted more than forty days. Christ goes forth firmly to his death, with no certainty that he is not a failure, but resigned to leave all in the hands of his Father. He has nerved

himself to finish his course, to go down with his flag nailed to the mast, for Christ was one of those who "never go back."

But now his attitude changes, to that of a man who has quit fighting because he has fought to a standstill, and who cares little for what may follow. In the main he maintains a dignified silence in the presence of his accusers and judges. When their efforts to prove his treason by the testimony of witnesses fall flat, he expedites matters and helps them out of their dilemma by giving the reply which they need in order to prove their case.

But the old buoyancy of spirit is gone. Hopeful courage and spiritual energy no longer sustain the body under pain and privation; it gives way. Physical reaction follows spiritual ebb, he cannot even bear his cross as the others. The black pall which shrouds his spirit, usually so bright and brave, by intensifying his sufferings tenfold, mercifully shortens them.

Crucifixion was neither death nor life, but an awful protracted suspense between the two. The sufferer usually survived a long time, lingering in unspeakable agony for three, four, even five days; until death was

not dreaded but welcomed. Now Christ was of powerful physique, he had led an active outdoor life without disease, he was in the prime of manhood, yet he survived only six hours on the cross, or about twelve hours after the arrest. He was the first of the three to die. So astonished was the experienced Pilate that he called on the Roman officer in charge of the execution to certify to the fact.

For this strange collapse of a strong man in a short time, for the mystery of Gethsemane and Calvary, the Manly Christ affords a solution, the only adequate explanation ever offered—that Despair of his mission which reached a climax in the agonized cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Calvary, Gethsemane, and the Wilderness are one.

Now he cares not how fast the failing flesh gives way—only to be Himself consistently until the end—until he can say

IT IS FINISHED.

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